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THE PROBLEM OF THE PENTATEUCH

AN EXAMINATION OF THE
RESULTS OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM

✓ BY

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WITH A FOREWORD BY
THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY

Οὐ γὰρ σεσοφισμένοι μύθοι ἐξακολουθήσαντες

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To

HENRY WACE, D.D., DEAN OF CANTERBURY

THESE LECTURES ARE DEDICATED
AS AN EXPRESSION OF HIGH PERSONAL REGARD
AND IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION
OF HIS IMPORTANT SERVICES
TO CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP

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FOREWORD

I AM gratefully sensible of the honour conferred on me by the President of the Lower House of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America in associating my name with these Lectures; and apart from that honour, it is a great pleasure to me to express the cordial sympathy and the deep conviction with which I concur in their general argument, and in the motive by which they are prompted. It ought not to be requisite for me to express, in the first place, my entire acceptance of the duty and the advantage of an unfettered application to the Holy Scriptures of the processes of sound criticism, which are, after all, only the application to the most important of all subjects of that faculty of reason, which we feel bound to apply to all other great problems in life. I fear, indeed, it is sometimes insufficiently borne in mind that reason has its moral as well as its purely intellectual function, and that its operations are sure to be imperfect if either the one or the other is imperfectly exerted. But no true Christian scholar can speak or think disrespectfully of criti-

cism in itself, or can fail to desire its full use in the study of the Scriptures. It, is however, no disparagement to criticism to question the conclusions of particular critics, and it is this, and this only, which is done in these Lectures.

Dr. McKim believes, and I cordially agree with him, that the alleged results of the current criticism of the Old Testament, as put forward by the school which has of late been predominant, are in certain cardinal points unsound, and, as an inevitable consequence, injurious to the Christian Faith. It is not to the purely literary analysis of the Pentateuch, and other works of the Old Testament, that our chief exception is taken — though, for my own part, I think that this analysis has gone far to refute itself by the excessive elaboration to which it has found itself driven. Our main objection is to the conclusions deduced by many critics as to the un-historical and untrustworthy character of the Old Testament narratives. We are plainly told that the Patriarchal narratives are not “historical,” or, in other words, that we cannot rely upon the revelations recorded as made to the Patriarchs having been really made. One momentous book, that of Deuteronomy, purports to record exhortations and laws solemnly given by God through Moses; and we are told, not only that they were never really so given, but that they convey a materially erroneous

account of the work of Moses, and attribute to him directions which he never gave. On the whole it is represented that the general account of the history which is conveyed by the plain statements of the Pentateuch, and which has been consistently believed by the Jewish nation from at least the time of Ezra, is gravely erroneous, and we are told by one of the most moderate representatives of this school in England, that our ideas on the subject must be "revolutionized."

What constitutes the gravity of such conclusions in relation to the Christian faith is that the traditional belief thus rejected was beyond question that of the first preachers of the Gospel, of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Stephen, not to mention the most Sacred Name. To myself, it appears that, apart from all dogmatic considerations, this fact alone is sufficient, on mere historical grounds, to show the unsoundness of the current critical views. The distance from the time of our Lord and the Apostles to the time of Solomon is about the same as the distance from our own day to the century preceding the Norman conquest; and we may judge from that comparison of the probability that the whole Jewish nation, their learned class and the people at large, should, without an apparent exception, have entertained radically erroneous ideas as to the course which their history had pursued. That a

whole nation should thus be mistaken, not as to the details, but as to the substance, of its history, would seem inconceivable, especially as no one doubts that written records were in use during the whole of the period in question. But how the unreserved acceptance of such error, and unqualified reliance upon it in argument, would be consistent with the character of inspiration in apostolic men would appear at least equally perplexing.

Of course if the new views were proved, we should have to accommodate ourselves to them, at the cost of the reconstruction of our faith in vital points. But it seems to me sufficiently shown in these Lectures that the views have not been proved, that the arguments on which they rest are defective in principle, and on broad issues, and not merely in detail, that critics of the first authority, and in increasing number, reject them, and that those who accept them are divided on points of cardinal importance. German critics of the highest ability, and even genius, led a whole generation astray in the criticism of the New Testament, and there seems no presumption in deeming it possible that critics of similar learning and genius may have led the next generation astray on the Old Testament. An impartial reader of Dr. McKim's argument will, I think, arrive at a conclusion respecting the traditional history of the Jewish nation similar to that

which Bishop Butler was modestly content to establish respecting the Christian Revelation: — “that it is not, however, so clear a case that there is nothing in it. There is, I think, strong evidence of its truth; but it is certain no one can, upon principles of reason, be satisfied of the contrary.”

HENRY WACE.

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INTRODUCTION

“I plead for a criticism of a saner sort.”

PROF. JAS. ROBERTSON, D.D.

“There is a criticism which is the very wantonness of experimental curiosity.”

BISHOP STUBBS.

“A sober observer cannot but conceive the greatest possible mistrust of the so-called assured results hitherto reached by the criticism of the Pentateuch.”

DR. FRITZ HOMMEL.

“Let it be distinctly stated that the true point in dispute is the supernatural origin of the Law. Under the disguise of a purely literary investigation, an attack is really made upon the Divine origin of the religious dispensation which was to be ‘a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ.’”

DR. ALFRED CAVE.

“The Spirit of Truth cannot take into His service literary fictions which trifle with the law and the sense of truth.”

CANON LIDDON.

“The real enemies and ultimate levellers of this so-called Higher Criticism are they of its own household. . . . Expert is ranged against expert; theory is displaced by theory; hypothesis by hypothesis.”

BISHOP ELLICOTT.

INTRODUCTION

WHEN one who is neither an orientalist, nor a Hebraist, nor an archæologist, nor an expert in literary analysis, undertakes to discuss the results of the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, it is natural that he should be met with the reminder, — “Shoemaker, stick to your last!” I acknowledge myself entirely open to such a criticism in taking up my pen on this subject; but I ask my critics on the threshold to remember that both Wellhausen, the oracle, and Robertson Smith, his interpreter, nearly a generation ago undertook to appeal their cause from the court of the orientalist, the linguist, and the expert scholar, to the forum of opinion over which common sense presides. The “Prologomena” of the former addresses itself to “the mass of Bible readers.” The argument is declared to be “within the scope of any one who reads the English Bible carefully, and is able to think clearly.”

A similar view has been recently expressed by an eminent scholar in relation to the most burning of New Testament problems. “The only thing to be

done," he says, "is for each of us to state his view of the case as he sees it, and to appeal to the public, to the jury of plain men, . . . to decide between the competing theories."¹

Now it is customary for jurymen, before rendering their verdict, to discuss the question at issue, and to give each his opinion of the arguments of the advocates in the case. It is this which I have undertaken to do. In the Lectures which follow I am speaking as one of the jury, not as one of the counsel. I give my judgment upon the arguments of the expert, hoping that my view of their respective merits will commend itself to my fellow jurymen, who must in the last resort pronounce the verdict.

It may not be amiss to say that I have been influenced to undertake these Lectures by observing the trend of modern criticism to more and more radical and destructive views. An eminent scholar, surveying the field of criticism forty years ago, could say that "most of the boldest writers, Eichhorn, De Wette, Ewald, Bunsen, Bleek, admit that it [the Law] is of the age, if not from the lips or the pen of Moses; that it existed in its primitive form and words, and, with some of the poems and other historical passages, was among the materials worked

¹ Rev. Wm. Sanday, D.D., "The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel."

up at a later date by the compilers or authors of the present books of Moses.”¹ Within ten or twelve years after these words were written, Wellhausen came forward with his elaborate theory based upon the denial that the books of the Law were of Mosaic origin, refusing to concede even the Decalogue to the authorship of the man whom the Hebrews have ever revered as their lawgiver. This able, ingenious, and profoundly learned critic differs from Ewald as much in the spirit in which he treats the Hebrew Scriptures as in the conclusions which he reaches. The devoutness, the reverence, the religious depth of the earlier scholar is painfully lacking in the later.² His views are (naturally, if not necessarily) destructive not only of the antiquity of the books, but of the reliability of the early history of the Jews. Indeed, we have the authority of one of the most distinguished of living scholars for saying that “it is only since Wellhausen that theory in regard to the events of sacred history has assumed a shape which is diametrically opposed to Biblical tradition, and especially to the narrative

¹ Milman's History of the Jews, 4th Edition, Vol. I, Bk. III, p. 177.

² Compare Ewald's indignant protest against “the so-called Criticism” “which has given up Moses and so much that is excellent besides,” and which “leads on directly to the contemptuous rejection of the Old Testament, if not of the New.”—Quoted by Prof. Body, *Permanent Value of Genesis*, p. 58.

parts of the Priestly Code.”¹ We have seen, in fact, in our generation a sharp and perilous reaction from the traditional view of the Scriptures. “On matters of Biblical criticism,” says a recent writer, “the pendulum has unduly swung from the standpoint of a narrow traditionalism towards that of an excessive toleration. The most destructive critics are now welcomed as fellow-workers in the path of progress, while there is a disposition to regard all conservative critics as more or less obstructives.”² The new views, meanwhile, are crystalizing into a tradition of scholarship, and are accepted by large numbers, especially of the younger students, without thorough examination, in obedience to the authority of the guild of scholars, rather than in obedience to reason. One hears from the pulpit and the platform, admissions that many of the Old Testament narratives are not historical but legendary, or fabulous. The appeal of Christ and his apostles to the Law and to the Prophets, as the test and touchstone of truth, is disallowed by not a few who to-day preach in his name. Mothers are counseled by clergymen not to read the Old Testament to their children. It is debated in Church papers whether the histories of the Hebrew Scriptures should be taught to the children of the Church. And

¹ Hommel, “The Ancient Hebrew Tradition,” p. 13.

² Dr. W. H. Wright’s Introduction, p. 6.

Diocesan Sunday-school Committees recommend for study in our Bible classes, histories and introductions written by disciples of the Wellhausen school.

One of the most noteworthy signs of the radical trend of modern criticism is the issuance of a great Biblical Encyclopædia in recent years, in which we find not only the most extreme views of the structure and character of the Holy Scriptures, but also elaborate articles assailing some of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. The editor of this monumental product of the negative and subjective criticism has recently published a volume ("Bible Problems") in which he denies that there is a shred of evidence for the Resurrection of Christ, and elaborately argues that the story of the Resurrection is due to the incorporation into the Christian gospel of the ancient resurrection myths — as of the Babylonian Sun-god, the Egyptian Osiris, and the Phœnician Adonis.¹

I have in one of my Lectures directed attention to the spirit which unfortunately tinges much of the literature of the modern critical school. To characterize it as overbearing and intolerant may seem harsh, but I fear the facts fully justify such a description. One observes a scarcely veiled contempt for any scholar who undertakes to defend a

¹ Cf. Article on "The Narratives of the Resurrection," *Contemporary Review*, Nov. 1905.

conservative position on the critical questions at issue. It is assumed that such writers are obscurantists — that they resist the application of modern scholarship to Biblical investigation — that their conclusions are predetermined by the inexorable demands of orthodoxy. Dr Sanday has recently given us an example of this in connection with a great New Testament problem. He quotes the following from Dr. Cheyne:

“Apologetic considerations are brought in to limit our freedom. The Fourth Gospel must be the work of the Apostle John, and must be in the main historical, because the inherited orthodoxy requires it.”

To this Dr. Sanday replies:

“Does he really think that ‘the inherited orthodoxy’ is nothing better than a taskmaster that stands over us with a whip to keep us from straying? Is that his view of the divine meaning in the history and development of nineteen centuries?”¹

Even Dr. Driver descends to this style of argument. In his “Introduction” (p. 14) he says of certain conclusions, “They are only opposed in the present instance by some theologians because they are supposed to conflict with the requirements of the Christian faith.”

Another characteristic of the method of argument

¹ “The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel,” Preface, p. 10.

too often employed by the negative critics is brought out by the same able scholar. Commenting on the "critical assumptions" of the school which denies the authenticity and authority of the Fourth Gospel, he says:

"In the eyes of the school to which Dr. Schmiedel belongs, I will not say exactly that all the data of which they approve are certain, but they are treated very much as if they were; in building up an argument upon them, possibilities easily and imperceptibly glide into probabilities, and probabilities into certainties."¹

This pungent criticism is the more noteworthy because it proceeds from a writer of such characteristically eirenic spirit as Dr. Sanday. His words are, I think, just as true, *mutatis mutandis*, of much of the reasoning of Old Testament critics of the Wellhausen school.

To yet one more feature of the method pursued by many of the leading critics, attention should be called: I mean the practice of discrediting the sources whence the materials of the history are drawn, when they conflict with the theory which the critic seeks to establish. The records are appealed to as witnesses to establish the theory, but their veracity is impugned when the testimony is damaging to the theory! The inconvenient passages are set down

¹ "The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel," Preface, p. 38.

as "late insertions," or "palpable glosses," etc. This method is described by one of our ablest and most candid and fair-minded scholars in the following caustic passage ¹:

"On what authority are these 'insertions' to be removed? By what guide are we to adjust the prophetic misapprehensions? The only fixed thing perceivable is the theory itself; the only standard is 'strike out' or 'I consider.' For the rest, what may be called by admirers a delicate process of criticism may appear to others uncommonly like a piece of literary thimble-rigging.

"You come upon the critic suddenly when he professes to be engaged in one of these delicate processes of criticism, and you find him slipping his subjective scale up his sleeve. The passages which disturb a pet theory are declared to disturb the connection.

"We have, in fact, no contemporary documents until the critic has adjusted them, and the theory ultimately is appealed to in confirmation of itself."

Here is an instance of this method: The books of Samuel contain a plain reference to Levites and Levitical cities. But this is in conflict with Wellhausen's theory of the post-exilic origin of these. Accordingly he declares, oracularly, "There is not

¹ Prof. Robertson in his "Early Religion of Israel."

a word of truth in the whole story — it is a gloss by a later editor!”

Compare the following from the new edition of “The Cyclopedic Handbook of the Bible,” by Dr. Angus and Dr. Green:

“When the facts are against the theory, the facts have to be altered that the theory may stand! Not once or twice merely *Elohim* is found where the hypothesis demands *Jehovah*, and the converse: the critic’s inference being that the text is corrupt or that the redactor has thrown it into confusion, etc.” (p. 399).

“Nothing,” writes Prof. C. Von Oveli, “is more astonishing to me than the readiness with which even diligent explorers in the field attach themselves to the dominant theory, and repeat the most rash hypotheses as if they were part of an unquestioned creed.”¹

I would like here to emphasize what I have stated in the text of the Lectures which follow, that the vital issue in this discussion is not the authorship, or the date, or even the structure of the sacred books, but their trustworthiness as historic records — as the records of God’s older revelation. It is because the critical theories now in the ascendant are fatal to the trustworthiness of the Scriptures that I feel moved to show the inconclusiveness of

¹ Introduction to Möller’s book, “Are the Critics Right?”

the arguments by which they are sustained.¹ Dr. Driver, indeed, insists that the Higher Criticism is concerned only with questions of the date, and authorship, and structure of the documents, and has nothing to do with historical conclusions. He says that Wellhausen's view of the date of the Priestly Code has no necessary connection with his view of the early stages of Israel's religious history. But certainly there is a natural, in some cases even a necessary, connection between literary criticism and historical criticism. The trustworthiness of the record cannot but depend upon its antiquity. Note also that Wellhausen's chief argument for his theory is the threefold correspondence between Law and History. How then can it be maintained that the Higher Criticism has nothing to do with historical conclusions? That the theory of Wellhausen has disintegrated the confidence of those who have embraced it in the trustworthiness of the Hebrew records is undeniable. Thus, Dr. Lotz, Professor of Theology in the University of Erlangen, in his recent work, "Das Alte Testament und die Wissenschaft," 1905, p. 22, says: "The newer criticism

¹ Compare the judgment of Prof. Jas. Robertson: "The hypothesis of Graf carries with it the assumption that the narratives accompanying the laws of the Pentateuch are not history in the proper sense of the word at all, but the product of late imaginative writers, and, in short, fictitious." — *Early Religion of Israel*, p. 466.

pronounces the whole representation of Old Testament history as we read it in the Bible, and as Jesus read it and acknowledged it to be, false." He further says that one of the chief points of the new view is that "Israel, previous to the discovery of Deuteronomy, possessed no written torah . . . except certain collections of judicial decisions." "The law of ceremonial worship was first produced in the time of the Exile, and after."¹

Even the moderate wing of the Wellhausen school, of which Dr. Driver and Dr. Kirkpatrick are illustrious representatives, is justly liable to the charge of denying the trustworthiness of the Hebrew records. Asserting, as these writers do, the independence of the literary problem and the historical problem, yet their recent essays on the "Higher Criticism" concern themselves prominently with historical conclusions, thereby illustrating the fact that the two classes of problems are inextricably interwoven, indeed often mutually dependent. Prof. Kirkpatrick tells us in his recent "Church Congress" paper that "historical criticism affirms that much of the history has been colored by the beliefs and practices of the times in which the books were compiled, long after the events, and must be regarded as rather an ideal than an actual picture of the national life. *It bids us, to a great extent,*

¹ I owe these quotations from Lotz to the Dean of Canterbury.

revolutionize our views of the course of the history of Israel."¹ Dr. Driver says, "We are not reading literal history, but history that has been idealized . . . or transformed." Now I have no wish to impute to these eminent scholars responsibility for all the destructive conclusions of Wellhausen. I recognize gladly their devout and reverent spirit, and their earnest effort to retain their hold upon the divine revelation of the Old Testament. But their position appears to me illogical. Having conceded so much to the views of their master, it is not easy to see why they do not concede more, and I think it very unlikely that the majority of those who accept their guidance will stop where they have stopped, on the slippery path that leads to the rejection of the authority and inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures. Wellhausen himself admits that "Moses was the founder of the torah, — that there is a certain Mosaic root to the Mosaic law as we now have it." Yet how thoroughly did he discredit the trustworthiness of the record! Dr. Driver, Dr. Kirkpatrick, and Prof. Ottley hold what has been called the *skeleton* view. In their opinion the patriarchal histories were not written for hundreds of years after the events. Nothing but a skeleton of tradition could have come down to the writers, and consequently they must be supposed to have clothed them with

¹ The italics are mine.

a moral and religious vesture of their own times. In other words, oral traditions furnished the skeleton, and out of these the pattern figures of the patriarchs were created. The statement of the Dean of Canterbury seems amply justified, "that the general view of the history that is associated with the school of Wellhausen is treated by these writers as having been established." Thus we must suppose "the Jews of the time of Ezra accepted a view of their national history which was a revolutionary misrepresentation of the facts." Dr. Driver has recently declared that he does not hold to the revolutionizing of the main outlines of Israelitish history. And yet, in his article on "Jacob," in Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible, he says that "the primary canon of sound historical criticism" is "that only narratives contemporary, or nearly so, with the events narrated, . . . can claim such a character" (of literal exactness). "The basis of the narratives in Genesis is, in fact, popular oral tradition; and that being so, we may expect them to display the characteristics which popular oral tradition does in other cases." "Wellhausen may be wrong in not allowing a more historical sub-stratum of the patriarchal narratives, but his general characterization of them is just." And what is his characterization? Why, he holds the entire Pentateuch not historical but legendary!

It is clear, then, I think, that while moderate critics like Driver and Ottley and Kirkpatrick cannot fairly be charged with the more extreme conclusions of Wellhausen, they do, nevertheless, belong to the Wellhausen school, and their influence must be held to tell, on the whole, for the disintegration of our confidence in the trustworthiness of the Old Testament Scriptures. One sees a fundamental antithesis between the positions of these critics and those of such scholars as Prof. Sayce, Prof. Hommel, Prof. Robertson, Prof. Orr, Dr. Lotz, and Dr. Wace, the Dean of Canterbury. Yet these scholars are prepared to concede much on questions of purely literary criticism. Thus Prof. Sayce admits that the critics may be right in affirming the late compilation of Deuteronomy and of the Priestly Code. Prof. Robertson concedes the possibility of the late compilation of Deuteronomy, and Dr. Wace remarks that "we must allow great scope to literary criticism in books which have come to us from such remote antiquity, and from the manuscripts of such late date." Yet these scholars stand in acute antagonism, not only to the extreme views of the Wellhausen school, but to the moderate wing as well.

What, then, is the real fundamental issue at stake between these opposing groups of scholars? It is not that the one group accepts the principles of the Higher Criticism, and the other does not. In other

words, it is not literary criticism, as such, that divides them, but it is the conclusions of literary criticism which are associated with the name of Wellhausen, and which are fatal to the historical trustworthiness of the books of the Pentateuch. Their criticism demands, as Prof. Kirkpatrick confesses, that "we should, to a great extent, revolutionize our views of the course of the history of Israel." The other group of scholars, while conceding the possibility of the late compilation of these books, maintain that they rest, not upon ancient oral tradition, but upon ancient documents contemporaneous with the events described.

If any confirmation of the correctness of the above statement were needed, it is found in the controversy waged in the columns of the *Record* for several months last autumn, between Dr. Driver and his friends on the one hand, and Dr. Wace on the other. That correspondence furnishes incidentally a strong confirmation of the position which I have taken in these Lectures, namely, that there is no *consensus* of opinion among the critics themselves upon the matters at issue. Dr. Driver, who has gone so far as to declare that it is a *suppressio veri* to deny that the critics are agreed, asserting that on all essential points they are at one — himself furnishes incidentally a refutation of his own position. He expresses great admiration of the scholarship of

Dillmann, yet he acknowledges that Dillmann differs from Wellhausen respecting the date and structure of the Priestly Code. Now precisely *that* is the distinctive feature of Wellhausen's theory. His views upon that point revolutionize the whole attitude of the critics who accept his leadership. How, then, can Dr. Driver claim a *consensus* of the critics on all essential points, when so great a critic as Dillmann, and many who follow his leadership, absolutely reject Wellhausen's view upon that point? As the Dean of Canterbury writes, the significance of Dillmann's position lies in the fact that, though he accepted the chief results of the literary criticism of the Pentateuch, he formally, and even indignantly, denied the conclusions which are based on it by the historical criticism of the school of Wellhausen. The fact is notorious enough for the writers of the article on the Tabernacle, in Hastings's Dictionary (Vol. IV, p. 64), to speak of "so strenuous an opponent of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis as August Dillmann." The Dean quotes Dillmann's own statement that "The Vatke-Kuenen Wellhausen view is, according to my conviction, wholly inconsistent with the statements of the Old Testament." Again, in reference to the same view, Dillmann says, "As to the internal contradictions and impossibilities of this theory, compare the work of James Robertson, of Glasgow, 'The Early Religion

of Israel as Set Forth by Biblical Writers and by Modern Historians,' a book which is, no doubt, written on somewhat broad lines, but which hits the nail on the head."

Notwithstanding these clear utterances of Dillmann himself, Dr. Driver will have it that the difference between Dillmann and Wellhausen is not vital. He is so firmly resolved that the critics shall be agreed "on all essential points," that he ignores the most pronounced differences between them. It must, indeed, be considered a remarkable fact that so great a scholar as Dr. Driver should contend almost with vehemence that it is a suppression of the truth to deny the *consensus* of the critics on all essential points, when such critics as Dillmann, and Klostermann, and Hommel, and Dr. James Robertson, and Dr. Lotz, and Dr. Hermann Strack (Professor of Theology at Berlin) and Prof. Van Oettingen (to mention no more), stand in distinct opposition to Wellhausen and his school, both as to the literary and the historical criticism of the Pentateuch. And I think the fact must seriously impair our confidence in the judgment, if not the accuracy, of the scholar who maintains such a paradox. The distinguished professor has given us recently another example of this infirmity of a noble mind. In the columns of *The Guardian* he calls attention to Prof. James Robertson's expressed "approval"

“of the line” taken by him (Dr. Driver) in his “Introduction.” He insists, too, that Dr. Robertson’s commendation of his book is “without reserve.” Now it is very true that Prof. Robertson commends Dr. Driver’s “fairness in the treatment of details,” and his “cautious reserve in face of doubtful or conflicting evidence.” He notes also, “with no little satisfaction,” indications that “he holds much more moderate views than those of the prevailing school of critics” (p. xi). But, having said this, Dr. Robertson clearly intimates his decided dissatisfaction with Dr. Driver’s position on some very vital points. He regrets that that scholar does not “accentuate the difference,” which he hopes really exists, between himself and Wellhausen, as König has done. Perhaps there was a good reason why Dr. Driver did not accentuate that difference, namely, because the difference was not fundamental. We have seen that he holds Wellhausen’s general position to be correct.

Prof. Robertson differs from Driver in maintaining the topographical accuracy of the Old Testament (p. xii), surely a very important particular bearing on its trustworthiness. But his chief difference with him — and it is an acute difference — touches “the relation of modern criticism of the Old Testament to the authority of the New Testament, and to the subject of inspiration.” He demands of Dr. Driver

whether Christianity would have equal value to us if Abraham be “a free creation of unconscious art,” and a great part of the Pentateuchal narrative “the fruit solely of late Jewish fancy.” And he finds Dr. Driver’s reply “altogether inadequate.” The assurance that “criticism in the hands of Christian scholars does not banish or destroy the inspiration of the Old Testament — it *presupposes* it,” does not satisfy this profoundly reverent and earnest scholar. He wants to know what Dr. Driver means by inspiration. He is distrustful of his attitude on this point, and desires to be informed wherein his position differs from that of critics who profess no such reverence for the Old Testament.

That the attitude of these two scholars on the question of the general trustworthiness of the Old Testament history is sharply contrasted cannot be doubted for a moment by careful readers of their works. As to Wellhausen, the one is in full agreement with his general position, though differing on some points, while the other writes an elaborate work in refutation of his views.

Exception has been taken to the representation given in the following Lectures of the position of Wellhausen in several particulars. Let a word be said here, then, on that subject. In his “History of Israel” (pp. 3, 4) the great German critic tells us

how he eagerly embraced the hypothesis of Graf, "who placed the Law later than the Prophets." This, indeed, is the fundamental feature of his system, and is generally recognized as such. That Wellhausen held to the unhistorical character of the Pentateuch is also, I think, generally conceded by students of his works. In his "Prologomena" (p. 320), he says, "In the patriarchal legend, the ethnographic element is always predominant," and again (p. 327), the legend itself, for the most part, is "the product of a countless number of narratives unconsciously modifying each other's work." He finds a difficulty in classifying Abraham, since he does not bear the name of a tribe, but he is quite sure he is not an historical character — no, but "a pure creation of unconscious art" (p. 320).

His view of the origin of Deuteronomy, that it was produced in the reign of Josiah, and that it was designed by its author, or authors, to be the basis, and to furnish the programme, of that monarch's reformation, does unquestionably destroy its historical character. Dr. Driver, indeed, objects to calling the book "a pious fraud," but if the situations it describes never existed, if the speeches it contains were never delivered (even in substance), and if the legislation it ascribes to Moses was not actually promulgated by him (again even in substance) — and this I understand to be Wellhausen's

view — then what was it but an invention for pious purposes, a fiction designed to produce a desired religious result? Dr. Hommel, once his enthusiastic disciple, so understands the matter. He denominates it as, on his view, “a forgery on a grand scale.”

As to the Priestly Code, I have said that Wellhausen regards it as “a work of the imagination of the priestly school in the time of Ezra,” and I am sustained by so able and candid a specialist as Dr. James Robertson, who characterizes the supposed work of the Ezra school as “a wholesale manufacturing of incidents and situations.” Again he says, “It amounts to an ascription of fiction, if not fraud, to the writers” (“Early Religion of Israel,” pp. 419, 420). This statement is particularly noteworthy in view of the fact that its author accepts the composite character of the Pentateuch, and holds that “The Biblical theory of the history is not inconsistent with the supposition of a late date for the book of Deuteronomy.” However, Wellhausen’s denial that there ever was a Tabernacle in the Wilderness, or a Day of Atonement appointed there, or for ages after, coupled with his declaration that the writers of these books “completely altered the ancient history,” is sufficient proof of what his real view was.

But we are told that Wellhausen holds that

“Moses was the founder of the Torah” (the Law). But we ask, in what sense and to what extent? Let us listen to his own account of the matter: “Moses may have been the founder of the Torah, though the Pentateuchal legislation was codified almost a thousand years later; for the Torah was originally not a written Law but the oral decisions of the priests at the sanctuary — case-law in short. . . . But while it was only at a late date that the ritual appeared as Torah, as it does in the Priestly Code, its usages and traditions are exceedingly ancient, going back, in fact, to pre-Mosaic and heathenish times. It is absurd to speak as if Graf’s hypothesis meant that the whole ritual is the invention of the Priestly Code, first put into practice after the exile; all that is affirmed by the advocates of that hypothesis is that in earlier times the ritual was not the substructure of an hierocracy, that there was, in fact, no hierocracy before the Exile, but that Jehovah’s sovereignty was an ideal thing, and not visibly embodied in an organization of the commonwealth under the forms of a specifically spiritual power.”¹

In this passage it is to be noted that the laws codified a thousand years after Moses were, in Wellhausen’s opinion, not written but oral; also, that the usages and traditions of the Priestly Code

¹ Art. “Pentateuch,” *Encyc. Britt.*, p. 513.

go back even of Moses, and have a heathenish origin; and that there was no Jewish hierocracy or priesthood before the Exile. Then we must recall another statement of Wellhausen, that "No trace can be found (before the Exile) of acquaintance with the so-called Mosaic Law" (the Priestly Code). Add to this his declaration that the Pentateuch is not historical but legendary; that Moses is not the author of the Decalogue; and that the writers of P "completely altered the ancient history," "idealizing the past to their hearts' content" — and it must become clear that what Moses contributed to the Law as we now have it was, in his view, a very slender and attenuated root indeed! According to him, the priestly school of Ezekiel "wrote a thin, fictitious history complementary to the legend which JE had already written hundreds of years after the events." They further embellished their record with "the fruit of late Jewish fancy" — the fiction of the Tabernacle, the fiction of Aaron's consecration to the priesthood, the fiction of the Day of Atonement. ¹

One of my critics ² has made an elaborate attempt to show that Hommel, Margoliouth, and Sayce are very doubtful allies for one who holds my views.

¹ "Prologomena," p. 348, quoted by E. E. Spencer.

² See the *Churchman*, Dec. 9, 1905.

Quite true, if his representation of their position were correct.

But let us see. We are assured by this writer that Dr. Fritz Hommel's position is "little removed from Wellhausen's," because he places the compilation or redaction of the original documents of parts of the Pentateuch in the time of the Kings, while Wellhausen places it in the time of Ezra. But the point is that the latter holds the Priestly Code, and Deuteronomy too, to be chiefly a work of the imagination, while Hommel holds the documents "are based on a trustworthy Mosaic tradition." Wellhausen says of the men who "produced" that Code, that they made "an artificial and ideal repristination." Dr. Hommel says the Priestly Code is "notoriously regarded by the Wellhausen school as a post-exilic forgery." And Wellhausen himself says, in his article, "Pentateuch" (Encyc. Brit., p. 512), "The substance of the Pentateuch is not historical, but legendary." It is true Hommel does not affirm the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch; neither do I: I hold it an open question. It is true, also, that he admits several sources in the Pentateuch — a position which I do not contest. But Hommel differs *toto cælo* from Wellhausen on the really vital parts of his theory, as any one who will read his "Ancient Hebrew Tradition" will see in places too numerous to cite. He speaks of the

“ingenious but misleading arguments” of Wellhausen in allotting “the different sources to various dates . . . all distant from the time of Moses” (p. 13). The purpose of his book is to show that “the traditions concerning the early history of Israel . . . contain a whole host of *records*, the antiquity and genuineness of which are vouched for by external evidence” (p. 25). Again, “Wellhausen bases one of the main pillars of his system” on “the assumption” that Deuteronomy first came into existence in the latter half of the seventh century B.C”; but this, he says, “we have no right to assume” (p. 10). On the contrary, “Deuteronomy must have been in existence at least long before Hosea” (p. 11). Again, “To assume that the inconsistencies — which are often enough merely superficial — between the Priestly Code and the state of affairs in the time of the Judges afford sufficient reason for proclaiming the whole Priestly Code a post-exilic fabrication,” involves “a monstrous falsification of tradition” (p. 17). Yet again, “Only since Wellhausen a theory in regard to the events of sacred history has assumed a shape which is diametrically opposed to Biblical tradition” (p. 13). Yet again, “It is unquestionable that the higher critics have gone virtually bankrupt in their attempt to unravel . . . the web in which the different sources are entangled” (p. 18). Finally, “The Graf-Wellhausen theory is

contradicted in various particulars by evidence of the most direct kind, which defies contradiction" (p. 27).

Yet we are assured that Hommel is "in virtual agreement" with Wellhausen! Strange that Hommel himself didn't find it out! Strange he should have written an elaborate work to show that Wellhausen's theory was untenable! Let me thank my critic for bringing out the fact that Hommel, who in 1892 was an enthusiastic adherent of Wellhausen, saw at length the error of his views and repudiated his former position in 1897.

Again, this critic has discovered that Prof. Margoliouth is not an antagonist, but an ally, of Wellhausen. He quotes from an article in Hastings's Dictionary a passage which proves to his satisfaction that the Laudian Professor considers that Deuteronomy was composed in the reign of Josiah, and then he gloats over the discovery of another passage in the same article in which Margoliouth is supposed to assert that no part of the Bible is of greater antiquity than 1100 B.C.! And so he finds that I have cited in support of my position an author who "sends the Decalogue flying into the air," and "pulverizes the patriarchal stories," and, in short, proves to be a more daring and destructive critic than Hermann Gunkel himself!

Had my ingenious critic no misgiving when he wrote these words? Did it not occur to him that such a discovery was really too good to be true?

Had he not heard echoes of the battle between this same Professor Margoliouth and Professors Cheyne and Driver and Dr. Neubauer, of the Bodleian Library, because of his contention that "between the date 200 B.C. and the books of the Old Testament there must lie the deep waters of the Captivity, the grave of the old Hebrew and the old Israel, and the womb of the new Hebrew and the new Israel."

That my critic has completely misunderstood Margoliouth's meaning can easily be made clear from one or two passages in his volume entitled, "Lines of Defense of the Biblical Revelation." *First*, as to the date of Deuteronomy: Margoliouth has an elaborate essay to prove that the Book of Wisdom is from the hand of Solomon.¹ He then declares (p. 71) that "Wisdom, without question, contains references not only to Genesis but to Exodus, Numbers, *Deuteronomy*." It follows that in his opinion Deuteronomy must have existed before the date of Solomon, which was, say, 1000 B.C. How, then, could he maintain in Hastings's

¹ I give no opinion upon this hypothesis of his. Its soundness or unsoundness does not affect my argument.

Dictionary that it had its origin in 621 B.C.? *Secondly*, as to the antiquity of the Pentateuch, Margoliouth writes (*Id.* p. 70): "The importance of this result is that it seriously damages the modern criticism of the Pentateuch. For that the Pentateuch known to the author of Wisdom (*i.e.*, Solomon) was practically the same as our Pentateuch does not admit of question." Is this a view in harmony with Wellhausen? Add to this his positive statement of his acute difference with the modern school as to "the *date and analysis* of the Hebrew documents." (*Id.* p. 309.) Notice also his sarcastic reference to "the modern Hebraists who reject Deuteronomy" (p. 287), and his boast, "We can walk through the camp of the Biblical critics without striking a blow" (p. 293). Again he refers to the "hopeless failure of the Hebraists of our time" to solve a particular problem, and animadverts on their self-contradictions (pp. 294, 295). In another passage (p. 70) he "doubts whether our critical instruments are sufficiently powerful to analyze documents of *such remote antiquity*"; and again he says (p. 285), "Therefore the *criticism of the Pentateuch collapses*." Would Margoliouth use such language about the Hebrew documents if they ascended no higher up the stream of time than 1100 B.C.? *Credat Judæus Apella; non ego!* And was he really in "virtual agreement," as this writer

tells us, with the dominant school of critics, when he so vehemently declared his acute antagonism to them?

It is not surprising, I admit, that one who is not familiar with Margoliouth's book, from which I have quoted, should have misunderstood the meaning of his article in Hastings's Dictionary; but it is simply impossible to interpret him as this critic has done, with that book of his before us, especially when one observes that the articles in the book were contributed to the *Expositor* in 1900, and the article in the Dictionary bears the date "1899." In the latter he is writing on "Language," and is considering *only the linguistic argument*; and in stating that no verse of the Old Testament can "probably" be named which is "earlier than 1100 B.C.," he is referring to the existing text, and cannot be supposed to deny what he has elsewhere so positively affirmed, that one of the books, or at any rate, parts of it, existed much earlier. He has in mind the work of the compilers, not the original documents. The same is true of his affirmation that "there seem cogent reasons for assigning the fifth book of the Pentateuch" to the reign of Josiah. That statement probably refers to the date when it assumed its present form — the date of its compilation, if you will. My contention, let me repeat, is not against the composite character of the books of the Pentateuch, nor against their compilation in

their present form, at a late date. Those questions are, to my mind, of quite secondary importance. But the vital question is, Are they trustworthy records of the Hebrew race and of the Hebrew religion? Dr. Robertson, whose work on "The Early Religion of Israel" is an elaborate and learned argument against the theory of Wellhausen, as to the books and as to the history (even in its modified form, as stated by Dr. Briggs), nevertheless holds that "there is nothing to preclude the supposition of various editings of the laws at different times, while yet the system, as a whole, and even the three separate Codes, had a positive basis in Mosaic legislation" (p. 386).

I conclude, then, that instead of there being "virtual agreement" between Hommel, Margoliouth, and Sayce on the one side, and Wellhausen on the other, there is in reality a bottomless gulf of difference between them upon the one point which to me is vital in this discussion, viz., the trustworthiness of the Hebrew records preserved in the Pentateuch.¹

THE OUTLOOK

What is the outlook in the field of Biblical Criticism? Will Wellhausen maintain his supremacy?

¹I have not quoted from Sayce — only because everybody knows his acute opposition to the modern theory.

Will the English critics who, while recoiling from some of his extreme conclusions, yet on the whole belong to his school — continue to be dominant in critical circles, in the mother country and in America?

There are good reasons, I think, for anticipating that this will not be the case. Since 1893 there has been a noticeable reaction, and it appears to be gaining in strength and volume year by year. Some accomplished scholars who ranged themselves then under the leadership of Wellhausen, forsook his standard before the close of the century, as I have pointed out in Lecture I, and recently Prof. H. H. Kuyper, of the Free University of Amsterdam, has delivered a University address entitled, "Development, or Revelation," in which he is reported to have held that recent archæological investigation in Bible lands undermines the whole subjective reconstruction of the Old Testament religion advocated by the advanced critics. Meanwhile, scholars of reputation have been coming forward with strong arguments against the modern view of the Scriptural history. In addition to those mentioned in the text of my Lectures I may mention Dr. Baxter, Dr. Kleinert, Prof. Nösgen, Dr. Hoffman, and more recently Dr. Hermann Strack, Professor of Theology at Berlin, Dr. Lotz, Professor of Theology in the University of Erlangen, and Prof. Van Oettingen,

an able Lutheran theologian.¹ The older works of the late Prof. Wm. Henry Green, of Princeton, ought also to be mentioned. His masterly review of W. Robertson Smith must be considered by the candid reader a conclusive refutation of Wellhausen as interpreted by the Scotch professor. The great Princeton critic, though dead, yet speaketh, and his arguments in at least some phases of the great critical issue will yet prevail. Dr. Fritz Hommel and Dr. Wace speak with the greatest appreciation of his ability and of his "relentless logic." He is quoted with great respect by the editor of the new edition just published of the Cyclopædic Handbook to the Bible.

The Dean of Canterbury expresses the opinion that "destructive criticism is receiving a real check in England," and the late Prof. Van Oettingen, treating of modern criticism under the head of Inspiration, in his important book on Lutheran Theology, comes to the same conclusion.²

It may be proper to say here that I by no means commit myself to all the views of the scholars to whom I have referred in the following Lectures as

¹ I would also call special attention to the able and comprehensive work of Prof. Jas. Orr, "The Problem of the Old Testament," published since these Lectures were delivered. It is satisfactory to find my chief positions confirmed by so accomplished a scholar.

² This fact I owe to the Dean of Canterbury.

allies in refuting the modern theory of the books and of the history of ancient Israel which is associated with the name of Julius Wellhausen. Dr. Hommel, Dr. Dillmann, Dr. Klostermann, Dr. Margoliouth, and others, may each uphold views on some points of this discussion to which I could by no means yield adhesion. The words of Horace are nowhere more applicable than in the field of Biblical criticism,

“Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.”

But because one cannot follow subserviently in the footsteps of any master of criticism, one is not, for that reason, debarred from citing any competent scholar who offers sound arguments against a particular view, which one is unable to accept. Because, for instance, I summon Dillmann as a witness against the post-exilic date of the Priestly Code, I cannot be faulted because I do not agree with him on some of the other critical problems.¹

In conclusion I may refer to Adolf Harnack's famous Preface to his *Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur*, in which, after characterizing our time as

¹“I am not concerned,” says Dr. Wace, “to defend all of Dillmann's opinions, or to maintain his consistency, but at least he was a great force. He described himself as the ‘brakesman’ in German criticism, and by this, says Count Baudissin, he did not mean that he was merely ‘a regulating influence,’ but he believed that ‘with recent critics it was a matter of driving to ruin, and it was against this he wished to guard.’”

one in which the New Testament writings had been treated as a tissue of illusions and falsifications, he declared that, for critical science, that time was past; that the net result of its investigations was that the tradition of the Church in regard to the early Christian literature was in the main reliable; and that that literature was for the most part veracious and trustworthy. Such a conclusion as this — that the critical labors of the latter part of the nineteenth century have resulted in a definite return to tradition — cannot but raise the question whether a similar result may not be anticipated as regards the Old Testament also, and so the next generation of critics may conclude that the most ancient Hebrew literature, which has so long been treated by many of the leading critics as a tissue of illusions and falsifications, is, after all, a veracious and trustworthy record, according to the tradition of the Jewish and the Christian churches for two thousand years and more.

NOTE. — Reference is made on p. 33 to the recent work of Dr. Hermann Strack *Die Genesis*, and to his *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 1895, in which, for example, after stating the view of the “Vatke-Wellhausen” school as to the origin of Deuteronomy, he says “weighty reasons (wichtige Gründe) speak against this opinion” (p. 57). Both these works are published in Munich.

LECTURE I

“The Pentateuch accounts for the mighty fabric of the Jewish faith — without it, the whole system becomes confused and unintelligible.”

DR. ANGUS.

“Given the existence of the Mosaic institutions, and the history of Israel is intelligible and consistent. Remove them, and the history at once becomes a dissolving view: all that we know is that it is false, and each successive critic has his own peculiar ideas as to how much is fact and how much fable.”

J. J. LIAS, D.D.

“There are Popes in the Higher Criticism as well as in Theology.”

PROF. SAYCE.

“Much which in these days passes for ‘results of criticism’ is, in tendency, openly destructive, and distinctly rationalistic in spirit. It disintegrates the Bible, subverts its historical foundations, and, in the chaos of conflicting theories, leaves the mind in utter bewilderment and doubt.”

PROF. JAS. ORR, D.D.

LECTURE I

IN beginning my lectures on the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, I am reminded that it is just one hundred years since that great scholar, the immortal De Wette, as he has been called,¹ who may be considered the direct ancestor of the now dominant critical theory, published his epoch-making book, the "Dissertatio Critica." In that work he maintained, as the Graf-Wellhausen school does to-day, that Deuteronomy was a composition struck off in the reign of Josiah, 621 B.C., and that the Pentateuch contains no history at all but only legend and poetry. But the ancestry of the prevalent critical opinions is more remote than this.

¹ By Dr. Saml. Davidson, "Introduction to Old Test.," Vol. I, p. 131, who quotes the following from his pen: "Pentateuchum non esse a Moses conscriptum, sed seriori ætate ortum, nostris diebus, postquam tam multum tamque docte atque sagaciter hac de re disputatum est, neminem adhuc esse puto, qui neget, præter eos qui auctoritatis suæ magis tuendæ causa, quam veritatis studio ducti, contrariam sententiam defendunt. Neque tamen satis est negare, Mosem Pentateuchi auctorem esse; res eo ducenda est, ut statuamus, diversorum auctorum scripta in eo volumine esse congesta et concinnata."

They must be traced to Baruch Spinoza, the excommunicated Jew, the father of modern Pantheism, who, as early as 1671, published the opinion that Ezra, not Moses, was the author of the so-called "Books of Moses." Some, indeed, find the same thought in the Apocrypha, 2 Esdras xiv. 21-22, where Ezra prays, "Lord, . . . thy law is burnt . . . but if I have found grace before Thee, send the Holy Ghost into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world since the beginning, which were written in thy law." It was another man of Jewish race, though of Roman Catholic faith, Jean Astruc, the French physician, who in 1753 gave forth the view that Genesis is a composite book, made up from two documents, the Elohist and the Jehovist; while the theory that Deuteronomy was a composition of the reign of Josiah boasts as its originator the famous Tom Paine, author of "The Age of Reason."

As we scan the history of the modern science which Eichhorn christened "The Higher Criticism," we are impressed with its changeful, shifting character. School follows school in quick succession. The "Documentary Hypothesis" is followed by the "Fragmentary Hypothesis," which is succeeded by the "Supplementary Hypothesis," and this again by the "Development Hypothesis." De Wette reigned supreme "for several decennia." He is,

however, deposed and the crown passes to Ewald.¹ That illustrious scholar is in time discrowned, and Hupfeldt reigns in his stead (1853), only to be himself deposed, and the kingdom transferred to Wellhausen (1878), for whom the way had been prepared by the Alsatian scholar Reuss² (1833), and his pupil Graf (1868), and by Kuenen the Dutch theologian (1870).

It is now about a quarter of a century since the critical theories of Julius Wellhausen were injected into the mind of the English speaking world, through the medium of various articles in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, by Wellhausen himself, and by Robertson Smith, his disciple. Within that period they have come to have an immense vogue among critical scholars. Indeed his school is the dominant school among Old Testament scholars to-day. So confident — not to say arrogant

¹ "So far," says Dr. Body (*i.e.*, to the time of Hupfeldt), "the path of criticism has kept true to the main position held by Astruc at the first. It has aimed at reconciling the critical analysis with the historical trustworthiness of the dissected records . . . and has uniformly assigned priority of date to the . . . Elohist documents. . . . The time was now at hand when both these positions were to be completely abandoned. . . . The new Pentateuchal controversy begins. Its first postulate is the complete reversal of the main results of the older criticism which gave it birth." — *The Permanent Value of Genesis*, p. 60.

² Reuss wrote in 1833, but did not publish till 1879, his "*L'Histoire Sainte et La Loi*."

—are his disciples, that they are disposed to ignore the existence of any other school of criticism, and to assume that to be a Higher Critic is to be, *ex vi termini*, a disciple of Wellhausen. An index of the dominance of these critical opinions is seen in the fact that not only are they supreme in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, edited by Dr. Cheyne, the mirror of the most extreme and destructive criticism, but they have also largely controlled the contributors to the more conservative *Biblical Dictionary* of Dr. Hastings, and have made effective lodgment in the pages of the new *Jewish Encyclopædia*, the eleventh volume of which has just been issued. A well-known American scholar declares that “the scholarly world has definitely adopted” the Graf-Wellhausen analysis of the books and of the legislation: “in the field of scholarship the question is settled.” And Prof. Kautsch, of Halle, describes the theory of Wellhausen as “one of the verdicts which no exegetical skill can now hope to reverse,” while Prof. Cornhill speaks of the progress of his theory as “an uninterrupted triumph.”

Nevertheless it is my purpose, in these lectures, to deny that this critical hypothesis of the great German scholar is a finality, and to give reasons, which I hope will convince your judgment, that there are just grounds for this denial. In setting my hand to such a task I would fain emulate the

spirit of a great English scholar who in like manner opposed the conclusions of the famous German critics of his day, — De Wette, Bleek, Ewald, Bunsen. He said of them, “These are men distinguished by indefatigable research, by vast knowledge of the Hebrew language and of the cognate tongues, by seemingly the most sincere and conscientious love of truth, in some cases . . . of the most profound Christian piety.” And then, as to why he opposed their views, he said, “It is not, I trust, from ignorance, nor from want of respectful and candid examination . . . I trust, too, from no narrow-minded prejudice, nor from superstitious reverence for ancient opinions, nor from any religious timidity.”¹ What that illustrious historian felt then, I feel to-day. Only it is not so much my own arguments upon which I rely, as the arguments of scholars of great ability, who have convinced me that many of the alleged “results” which Wellhausen and his school have reached, rest upon a very insecure foundation, and will not stand as “finalities of scholarship.”

Experience does not justify us in concluding that Right and Truth are always on the side of the heaviest battalions of scholarship. Wellhausen himself points out that “for several decennia all who were open to critical ideas at all stood under De Wette’s

¹ Dean Milman, “History of the Jews,” Vol. I, p. 177, note. (4th Edition, 1866.)

influence" ¹— yet the reaction came and that great scholar's influence waned and sank. Who shall say that a similar fate does not await Wellhausen himself? He has been supreme "for several decennia," but there are not lacking signs of his eclipse.

Some years ago I took up a volume of Essays published by John Fiske in 1876.² In that volume, side by side with his beautiful and inspiring discussion of Immortality, I found an essay upon "The Jesus of History," which I confess was to me anything but "inspiring." That essay began by declaring the writer's acceptance of the "results" reached by the Tübingen school, as a finality of scholarship — as furnishing the basis and starting-point for a study of the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth. I need not remind you how grave was Mr. Fiske's mistake in building upon such a foundation. The then triumphant Tübingen theory has been completely discredited, and its epitaph tersely written in the words "*Tübingen fuit!*" Is it presumptuous to suggest that the fate that befell Christian Baur may yet overtake Julius Wellhausen?³

¹ Art. "Pentateuch," Encyc. Brit., p. 505.

² "The Unseen World."

³ The Dean of Canterbury, in a recent letter, received since the above was written, calls my attention to the opinion expressed by the late Professor Van Oettingen, in his recently published work on Lutheran Theology, to wit, "that Wellhausen must go the way of Baur."

This result may be anticipated on logical principles, when it is observed that Wellhausen's "Development Hypothesis" is philosophically akin to the Tübingen theory. An able critic of our own communion calls attention to this. He says: "The whole theory can rightly be understood only when it takes its place, in company with the New Testament criticism of Baur and Strauss, as an ultimate result of the Hegelian Philosophy. . . . In fact, the same year, 1835, which saw the publication of Baur's 'Die Christliche Gnosis,' and of the original edition of the 'Leben Jesu,' of Strauss, was marked by the issue of Vatke's 'Biblische Theologie,' in which, avowedly from the Hegelian standpoint, he contended that the order of development of the Israelitish religion had been wrongly apprehended, and that henceforth Prophetism and Mosaism must change places." ("The Permanent Value of Genesis," C. W. E. Body, D.C.L., pp. 60, 61.)

That scholar's theory is already challenged by a considerable and growing school of accomplished scholars and critics, one of whom ¹ boldly predicts that "the hypothesis (of Wellhausen) will not long be regarded by any number of scholars as a satisfactory solution of the question of the composition of the Pentateuch."

Writing in 1893, Professor Briggs, having declared

¹ Dr. Chas. H. Wright, "Introduction to the O. T.," p. 97.

his adhesion to the critical analysis of the literary documents and legislation of the Pentateuch, calls a most formidable roll of European and American scholars who accept that analysis, affirms that they are sustained by the unanimous voice of the Hebrew scholars of Europe, and triumphantly demands, "Where are the Professors in the Old Testament Department in the Universities and Colleges of Europe who hold a different view?"¹

Well, it was soon possible to answer this challenge by pointing to D. S. Margoliouth, Laudian Professor of Arabic in the University of Oxford, and to Dr. James Robertson, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Glasgow, and to Dr. Fritz Hommel, Professor of Semitic Languages, University of Munich, and to A. H. Sayce, Professor of Semitic Languages, University of Oxford, all of whom arrayed themselves in opposition to the Wellhausen critical analysis of the documents and the legislation. Moreover, several of the scholars whom Dr. Briggs puts in his roll of Wellhausen adherents, within a short time thereafter changed their views, and took strong ground on the opposite side. Among these was the illustrious archæologist, Dr. Hommel, who in 1897 published his "Ancient Hebrew Tradition" declaring his new attitude. Another was Prof. C. Von Orelli of Bôle, who in 1899 stood

¹ The "Hexateuch," pp. 94, 144.

sponsor for Wilhelm Möller's monograph,¹ "Are the Critics Right?" in which that young scholar renounced his allegiance to Wellhausen. Another was Prof. Klostermann of Kiel, who that very year, 1893, issued his work on Deuteronomy, controverting Wellhausen's views. Dr. Driver has recently sought to weaken the force of the appeal to Prof. Klostermann, by pointing out that he accepts the composite character of the books of the Pentateuch, as when he says that P is distinct from JE, that JE is composite, and that the discourses of Deuteronomy as we have them "are the expansion and translation into the religious phraseology of the age of the old Law book found by Hilkiah in the Temple."

But all this does not touch the real issue between him and Wellhausen. In Klostermann's view the book found by Hilkiah was "The old Law book," whereas Wellhausen regards it as a newly composed book. The two men occupy opposite poles of thought. The one holds the book historical and trustworthy — the other holds it unhistorical. The one holds the discourses to be the expansion of discourses actually delivered by Moses in the situations described — the other that the discourses and the situations too were invented without any real

¹ "Historische-Kritische Bedenken gegen die Graf-Wellhausen'sche Hypothese."

historical basis. Another scholar claimed by Dr. Briggs is Köhler, of Erlangen: yet Möller tells us it was he who first directed his attention to the weakness of the Wellhausen positions. Within a year another distinguished orientalist, M. Halévy, is reported to have publicly repudiated the views of the dominant school.

These and other indications seem to show that Prof. Sayce was right when he predicted the ebb of the wave of historical skepticism, and encouraged the hope that those who cannot accept the Wellhausen analysis of the literary documents and legislation of the Pentateuch will no longer occupy so lonely a position among critical scholars as they have done.

Perhaps, then, we may take up our task without feeling that we are attempting the impossible, attacking an impregnable position, or leading a forlorn hope.

Let me on the threshold of our discussion put you on your guard against an assumption frequently made by writers in both the secular and the religious press, that there is no middle ground between the traditional view of the Holy Scriptures and the critical view of the Graf-Wellhausen school. Thus a representative writer some while ago said:

“The real conflict is between modern scholarship

and the traditional view — between reason and authority.” “It is the battle of truth against prejudice.” We are assured that “practically *all* Old Testament scholars” have accepted the Wellhausen theory; and any attempt to contest its finality is at once declared to be “the protest of theological prejudice against the application to Bible study of modern methods of historical, linguistic, archæological and literary investigation.”¹ In other words, there are two, and only two, classes of thinkers on this subject, — the traditionalists and the disciples of Wellhausen. If you would be one of the guild of higher critics, it is not enough to pursue the historical method of Biblical study — you must accept a certain set of “results,” you must pronounce the shibboleth of a certain school, you must bow down to the majority. Otherwise you are in the army of Prejudice: Truth disowns you!

The great Lightfoot, in introducing his monumental work on the Ignatian Epistles, refers to “the moral intimidation” of certain eminent writers who seemed to wish to foreclose the further investigation of the Ignatian problem by the iterated assertion that “all impartial critics” have condemned those Epistles as spurious.

We meet the same kind of “moral intimidation” in the pages of critics who seem to desire to foreclose

¹ *The Churchman*, Nov. 4, 1095, p. 704.

the critical problems of the Pentateuch by loudly proclaiming that all impartial critics are substantially agreed in accepting the main features of the modern view of the analysis and structure of those ancient documents which is associated with the name of Wellhausen.

But in the interests of clear thinking, and of truth itself, it must be said that the above is not a scientific classification. It smacks of literary intolerance. There is a great company of divines and scholars who are found neither in the one nor the other of these camps. They vigorously reject the hypothesis which turns the books of the Bible topsy-turvy, putting the Prophets before the Law, making Deuteronomy, to all intents and purposes, a pious fraud in the reign of Josiah, 621 B.C.,¹ and substantially the rest of the Pentateuch a work of the

¹ Wellhausen, in the Introduction to his "Prologomena," says that "in all centres where scientific results may hope for recognition, it is admitted that Deuteronomy was written at the time in which it was discovered, and was employed as a basis for the reforms introduced by King Josiah." Upon which Prof. Hommel remarks, "In other words, however pious the intention may have been, a downright forgery on a grand scale had been carried out." ("The Ancient Hebrew Tradition," p. 4.) He adds that "Prof. Klostermann has recently shown most conclusively that the narrative of the discovery of a legal code in the time of Josiah, which is rightly taken to refer to Deuteronomy, bears the impress of absolute credibility, and consequently excludes the possibility of any such subtle deception as that predicated by critics of the modern school." (*Id.* p. 10.)

imagination of the time of Ezra;¹ which in effect destroys the historical ground that underlies the Jewish religion and theocracy, which eviscerates the Hebrew Scriptures of all true prophecy, and of their traditional supernatural origin and authority; and which, finally, expels the sweet psalmist of Israel from the Psalter, making it the Psalm-Book of the second temple: this hypothesis, I say, these men reject, yet they themselves apply to the study of the Bible the principles and methods of the Higher Criticism. They have no fear of the ultimate result of letting in all the light that history and philology and archæology can throw upon the Bible.

With this view your lecturer is in full sympathy. I stand for the freest investigation of the Bible. As a Protestant theologian I abhor the idea of fettering the reason. Let the light shine. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." I am not embarked upon any cast-iron theory of inspiration which may conceivably be cracked or broken in the process of free inquiry. I even sympathize with the avowal of a late Archbishop of Canterbury (Benson) that the Church is bringing home rich sheaves from the much dreaded fields of criticism.

But when I have said this, there is something else

¹ Hommel says the Priestly Code "is notoriously regarded by the Wellhausen school as a post-exilic forgery." — *The Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, p. 25.

which I must also say: Though we should be open-minded to truth from whatever quarter it comes, and though we should be prepared to accept conclusions that are based on sound reasoning, we must never for a moment forget that the *onus probandi* rests upon those who ask us to abandon beliefs which the Jewish and Christian churches have cherished for over two thousand years. They who advocate revolutionary ideas, whether in government, in scholarship, or in religion, must show good cause, and their arguments must possess conclusive, even overwhelming force. Wise men will not be lightly persuaded to overthrow long established institutions, or to abandon long inherited beliefs. And if we are summoned by the critics to revolutionize our whole conception of the structure and nature and significance of the Scriptures, we have a right to demand proof — clear, strong, conclusive, without a shadow of suspicion on its reality or its sufficiency.

We do not profess, then, to approach the criticism of the Bible without any prepossession. We come, indeed, with open minds, but we come as Christians. Our minds are not as a *tabula rasa* : no, the Christian creed is graven upon them. We could not, if we would, erase it — or just ignore it for the purposes of the investigation. And that creed, graven on our hearts, tested by experience, proven by its power

over our lives, must inevitably influence our judgment in weighing the validity of some of the most important arguments in the critical discussion. Here I avail myself of some weighty words of an illustrious writer, the late Bishop Stubbs: "The Bible is not like any other book; no other book comes to us with a claim authorized by the Church of our baptism as containing the Word of God . . . This means that it is to us a paramount witness of Truth . . . The whole form and character of our religious thought is framed on it . . . It is impossible for those who have been so taught to put themselves in a neutral or impartial attitude regarding it, without such a strain, such a wrench of mental and moral force, as drives them past the central station of fair judgment. . . . Indifference to Holy Scripture means disregard for it: We cannot treat it as any other book, even if it were susceptible of such treatment: but it is like none other, and, indeed, it is the fact that it is like none other that has led critics to apply to it methods of arbitrary, wanton, and conjectural criticism, which applied to Greek, or Roman, or even Anglo-Saxon literature would be laughed out of court." ¹

In this connection I would call attention to the prepossessions which lie behind some of the most

¹ Bishop Stubbs's Visitation Charge, May, 1893, p. 138. (Repeated in "Ordination Addresses," pp. 147, 148.)

fundamental conclusions of the extreme school with which we are concerned in these lectures. One of the axioms of the criticism of Kuenen and Wellhausen is that there can be no real prediction of future events by divine revelation, and that no narrative embodying a supernatural occurrence is credible. The critical theory has been thus formulated: "The representation of a course of history is *a priori* to be regarded as untrue and unhistorical if supernatural factors interpose in it."¹ Ernest Renan says, "A supernatural account cannot be admitted as such; it always implies credulity or imposture." And Kuenen, "Their representations, to put it in a word, are utterly unhistorical, and therefore cannot have been committed to writing until centuries after Moses and Joshua." Thus critical questions are settled by the *a priori* assumption that whatever is set down as supernatural must be unhistorical, and that every passage containing prediction of future events must have been written subsequent to the events described.

Now, in the search after truth, the wise man will consider the antecedents and prepossessions of the witnesses, and it is not narrowness or dogmatic prejudice, but a precaution due to scientific accuracy,

¹ Frank, "Geschichte und Kritik der neuen Theologie," p. 289, quoted by Whitelaw.

for the Christian student to take note of this naturalistic bias on the part of some eminent scholars, whose opinions have great weight in the critical world. Their critical judgments are colored and conditioned by this anti-supernatural bias, and we are bound, as honest men, to consider how far their arguments are invalidated and their conclusions vitiated by it.

As to the seriousness of the issue ultimately involved in the modern critical theory, I beg to refer to the judgment expressed concerning Wellhausen's views by a scholar far removed, indeed, from traditionalism, I mean Prof. G. T. Ladd: "It is evident that such views of the Pentateuch, on account of the naturalistic philosophy which underlies and shapes the criticism upon which they depend, are calculated to exercise a profound influence upon the entire theological conception of the Bible. They do not simply tend to change further those theories of the nature of biblical inspiration and infallibility, which belong to the post-reformation dogma; they rather take hold upon the very idea of biblical revelation, and upon the fundamental question of the general credence to be given to the records of an alleged supernatural religion."¹

Such is the radical and vital character of the issue at stake in the acceptance of the critical opinions

¹ "Doctrine of Sacred Scripture," Vol. II, p. 241, 1883.

of Julius Wellhausen. It is not the date, or the authorship, or the structure of the books of the Bible, but "the very idea of biblical revelation" and the very existence of a supernatural religion.

Just here let me remind you that I am speaking as a Christian student to men who are also Christian students. In our critical studies we are not discussing the evidences of Christianity: we are not trying to convince unbelievers of the truth of our holy religion. In that case we could not assume the Christian ground. We could not ask of them any concession to our convictions as Christian men about the reality of the supernatural, or the authority of Christ.

Neither am I, in these Lectures, addressing myself to agnostics, or to Buddhists, or to the disciples of Confucius, but to Christian students, who must necessarily approach the study of the critical questions as convinced believers, nay as men who believe themselves inwardly moved of the Holy Ghost to take upon them the office of ministers of Christ. "The Christian critic," it has been well said, by an able scholar, "ought to start from the basis of the New Testament," and hence he cannot consent to judge the critical questions about the Old Testament from the naturalistic standpoint, which discredits miracle and prophecy, — although, at the same time, he is equally bound to conduct his investigations

without regard to any theory of inspiration which he may have formulated.

We cannot, indeed, demand that the unbelieving critic should accept our Christian standpoint in his critical investigations any more than we can accept his naturalistic point of view. But my concern here is not with him, but with men who are believers, and who desire some guidance in judging of the critical theories so much in vogue at the present day. And speaking to such, it is right to ask the question, Why should we sit at the feet of men who begin their critical investigations by assuming that neither miracle nor prophecy is possible?

Another cautionary signal I feel in duty bound to show for the guidance of the earnest seeker after truth in these critical discussions is this:

You will find on the side of the remarkable hypothesis which I am making bold to challenge, an immense array of able and accomplished scholars. You will be told that Wellhausen's theory has passed the experimental stage: it is no longer a subject for debate: it is one of the accepted finalities of scholarship. Now lest your judgment be overborne by the weight of what we may call this tradition of scholarship, it is well to recall the fact that a number of grievous mistakes have, within

recent years, been brought home to this triumphant school of critics, which should put us on our guard against accepting their conclusions too readily. Let me give one or two instances:

1. Writers of this school formerly based their skepticism concerning the Mosaic authorship, or date, of the Pentateuch on the assumption that the age of the Hebrew lawgiver was not a literary age. The literary use of writing could not have been known to an Israelite at that epoch. Therefore these books could not have originated then. Vatke, one of Wellhausen's oracles, denied that the age of Moses had the knowledge of writing. Similar was the view of Wellhausen himself. He says, "Writing had been practised earlier than 850-750, but only in formal instruments, mainly on stone." (Article "Israel," *Encyc. Brit.*, p. 408).

But the Tel el-Amarna correspondence, uncovered by the spade of the archæologist in 1887-88, revealed the fact that in the century before the Exodus, Palestine was a land of books and schools. Thus the hypothesis for which the critics claimed a *consensus* of scholarship was completely overturned, and assertions like that of Kautsch, that "there was not, and could not be, much writing in the early days of Jewish history," shown to have no foundation. Such a colossal and fundamental mistake as this may well caution us not to accept too trustfully

the conclusions now urged by the same critics as final and unimpeachable.

2. Another instance in point: It is a common opinion among critics of this school that there is no history in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. But a few years ago they drew the historical line farther down the stream of the narrative: they looked upon the fourteenth chapter of Genesis as unhistorical. The campaign of Chedorlaomer was a pure invention: the names of the kings mentioned in the story "were resolved into etymological puns." One eminent orientalist pronounced this chapter to be "a fantastic grouping together of names . . . expressly invented for the occasion," and the critics straightway adopted this view. The whole chapter was the invention of a later age, — nothing of history about it! But archæological scholars by and by were able to show from the cuneiform inscriptions that these strange names were historical, and there had been a king of Elam, Chederlaomer, who held supremacy over Palestine.¹ So the critics were compelled to acknowledge their error; but they then put forward a new hypothesis, that "the Jew who inserted Genesis xiv., one of the latest portions of the whole Pentateuch, in its present position, must have obtained in Babylon exact information in regard to the early history of the country, and for

¹ Cf. Sayce, "Higher Criticism and the Monuments," p. 161.

some reason which we are unable to fathom mixed up Abraham with the history of Kudur Lagamar.”¹ Dr. Fritz Hommel, the illustrious orientalist of Munich, tells us that this fourteenth chapter of Genesis has come to be a sort of Shibboleth for the two leading schools of Old Testament critics,” *Id.* p. 164, and he adds, “The authenticity of a narrative such as that . . . is an unanswerable criticism upon the views which are now in fashion with regard to the credibility of the ancient Hebrew tradition.” And how do the negative critics deal with it? Certainly in very inconsistent fashion. Dr. Peters, for instance, admits that Amraphel, Arioch, and Tidal, are historical personages, and that the story “probably contains a reminiscence of actual events.” But he denies that Abraham was an historical character. On this a recent reviewer in the *Guardian* asks Dr. Peters this pertinent question: “How is it that the names are unreal on the Hebrew side but historical on the side of the foes? If the invaders were individuals, does not this justify the expectation that the defenders were individuals also, and that Abraham and Lot were as much real persons as Amraphel and his allies?”

3. Between the years 1896 and 1900 a document was discovered, since known as the Cairene Ecclesiasticus, and “was accepted by all the leading

¹ Meyer, quoted by Hommel, *Id.* p. 161.

Hebraists of the time as a work of the second century B.C., whence the existing Greek and Syriac translations were derived." But, in fact, it has been shown to date from the eleventh century after Christ, and to have been compiled from those two existing translations.

Upon this D. S. Margoliouth, Laudian Professor of Arabic in the University of Oxford, remarks, "The Ecclesiasticus experiment was forced on the Hebraists of our time, and, though an easy problem, belonged to precisely the same region as that in which the criticism of our time was accustomed to run riot. And it resulted in hopeless failure." And this brilliant scholar concludes his essay in these words:

"In differing about the date and analysis of Hebrew documents from a school which could be deceived for a day by this document . . . and could spend a year in defending it, I do not seem to myself to be incurring any serious risk."¹ Mistakes such as these — of so serious a nature — may very properly be noted by the student, as showing that conclusions which claim a large *consensus* of expert scholarship may after all turn out to be erroneous.

In order to emphasize the caution, I shall now direct attention to the judgment pronounced upon

¹ "Lines of Defence of the Biblical Revelation," pp. 294, 309.

the critical scholarship of our generation by several scholars whose opinion must carry great weight. Prof. Ramsay, the famous author of "St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen," thus expresses himself in the Preface to that work:

"There is no class of literary productions in our century [the nineteenth] in which there is such an enormous preponderance of error and bad judgment as in that of historical criticism. To some of our critics Herodotus is the Father of History, to others he is an inaccurate reproducer of uneducated gossip! One writer at portentous length shows up the weakness of Thucydides, another can see no fault in him" (p. 3). And the late Bishop Lightfoot — that illustrious scholar of the Victorian era — in the course of his overwhelming reply to a famous attack on Christianity, expressed the opinion that the historical sense of eighteen centuries is more to be depended on "than the critical insight of a section of men in one late half century." He compares the negative school of critics with the Rabbis, and thinks their work as "perverse and unreal" as theirs, and he anticipates for it a like fate. Referring to German critical literature, he says, nowhere, in any literature, does he know of such a mass of absurdities as have been heaped together by some of the most able and learned German critics in connection with the names

Euodias and Syntyche in the Epistle to the Philippians.¹

To these weighty opinions on the critical scholarship of the age, I will now add some citations of expert opinion upon the particular hypothesis which directly concerns us.

Prof. Sayce, of Oxford, having affirmed that the end of the nineteenth century was "witnessing the ebb of a wave of historical skepticism which began to flow more than a century ago," gave his judgment upon the general question in these words:

"The higher critic may be right in holding that the historical books of the Old Testament in their present form are compilations of comparatively late date, but he is no longer justified in denying that the materials they embody may be contemporaneous with the events recorded in them."

This, I may remark, flatly contravenes the conclusions of Dr. Driver in his Commentary on Genesis. Dr. Fritz Hommel writes, "According to the principles put forth by Meyer in his historical capacity, the theory of the history of Israel which Reuss, Graf, and Wellhausen have built up with such wonderful ingenuity, 'must collapse' inevitably and irretrievably . . . for the Graf-Wellhausen theory is contradicted in various particulars by evidence of the most direct kind, which . . . defies

¹ "Supernatural Religion," pp. 23, 24.

contradiction.”¹ Wilhelm Möller, in his *Mono-graph on the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis* (1903), says:

“I myself was immovably convinced of the irrefutable correctness of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis, so long as I allowed it alone to have an effect upon me. But after my attention was once directed to its weaknesses (first by Köhler in Erlangen), after I had studied with some thoroughness the scientific literature on the other side, this hypothesis seemed to me more and more monstrous.”

Next, I give the opinion of Rev. James Robertson, D.D., Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Glasgow, one of the ablest, most open-minded and candid writers on critical subjects. He says:

“The modern critical theory . . . raises difficulties of a much more serious kind in the way of its own acceptance.” “A history is no doubt constructed, but the supporting beams of it are subjective prepossessions, and the materials are only got by discrediting the sources from which they are drawn.” “The self-styled ‘higher’ criticism is, indeed, not high enough, or we should perhaps more appropriately say, not deep enough, for the problem before it.” “The heart of the religion is hardly looked at, or rudely torn out of it.” The

¹ “The Ancient Hebrew Tradition,” p. 27.

modern theory "postulates miracles of a literary and psychological kind, which contradict sound reason and experience as much as any of the physical miracles of the Old Testament transcend them."¹ Dr. Klostermann, of Kiel, in his work, "Der Pentateuch," makes fun of the scientific analysis set forth in the Rainbow Bible. He describes the method of the critics as "hair-splitting and atom-dividing." Commenting on his work, the *Expository Times* said, "By a skilful use of the lower, or textual, criticism, Prof. Klostermann is believed to have given the Higher Criticism the greatest shake it has yet received."

Yet another important fact to be borne in mind, preliminary to the study of this modern view of the structure and character of the Biblical writings, is the pronounced disagreement among the critics themselves upon matters of capital importance.

It is claimed, indeed, that "the scholarly world has definitely adopted" the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis. Dr. Driver denies that the critics are divided among themselves, and affirms that on all important points they are agreed. Now in rebuttal of this statement, I cite the judgment of a scholar who certainly cannot be accused of being biased in favor of traditional views, and whose ability is unquestionable. I refer to Dr. A. B. Bruce, who,

¹ "The Early Religion of Israel," pp. 465-477.

writing in 1899, when the claim for unanimity was just as positively made by Wellhausen's disciples as now, says: "Once more the apologist may plead the unsettled state of critical opinion. It will be time enough for the apologist to dogmatize when criticism has arrived at the stage of finality. It is far enough from having reached that stage yet. Not to mention endless diversity of view on special points, there are broad contrasts between different schools even with reference to the leading critical problems." ¹

There is, indeed, an agreement among them that there are four principal sources whence the so-called Hexateuch is derived — and upon that point I do not undertake to challenge their conclusion — but as to the authorship, date, contents, and limits of these four documents, and as to their real character, there is fundamental disagreement. In other words, the agreement appears to be upon matters of secondary importance, while on the primary and palmary question of the reliability and the historical character, to say nothing of the inspiration, of the documents, the disagreement seems hopeless. The "results" are curiously lacking in harmony. Thus, as to the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue — Kuenen affirms it, Wellhausen denies it. Ask Wellhausen if the Exodus was an historical event,

¹ "Apologetics," p. 171.

he answers in the affirmative. Ask Stade, and he will say, "Impossible! The Israelites never were in Egypt." As to the documents, or "sources," which the critics discover in the Pentateuch — one critic will tell you D is earlier than P, another that P is earlier than D. As to the order of the four chief "sources," J, E, D, and P, almost every possible order has been maintained by reputable critics within a comparatively short period.

Even as to the prophets — whether they are pre-exilic or no — there is no *consensus*. Some of the critics maintain that the whole Biblical literature is later than the Exile.

But what have the critics of the Wellhausen school to say of the character of the Biblical books? Are they historical? Have they any divine authority behind them? Do they record any divine revelation, strictly so called? To all these questions we get diverse, often contradictory, answers. Speaking generally, the historicity of the Pentateuch is rejected by the Graf-Wellhausen school, — but there is no agreement about it. Dr. Briggs accepts it. George Adam Smith finds an "historical substratum" in it. Dr. Driver appears to occupy a middle ground, advancing (in his "Genesis") some probable arguments for considering the patriarchs historical characters, though he finds no "history" in the first

eleven chapters of Genesis. Dr. J. P. Peters holds that the patriarchs are not historical characters — Moses is the first man of flesh and blood in the narrative; but Dr. Cheyne thinks scholars will ere long see that Moses, too, is a fictitious character. As to Revelation, Driver and George Adam Smith find some record of it in the Pentateuch, at least in a certain sense. Not so Kuenen and Wellhausen. Wellhausen holds that the Israelitish religion, so far from having its origin in a divine revelation, as the Bible asserts, worked itself up by degrees out of heathenism; and Kuenen affirms that the Jewish and Christian religions are no more entitled to be considered of supernatural origin than Buddhism or Islamism. If we inquire whether the critics of this school do not agree, at least about the four principal sources, say of the Pentateuch, we find the master of the school affirming that P, the Priestly Code, was a post-exilic fabrication — made, so to speak, out of the whole cloth by the priestly school, while Dr. Briggs holds that though it did indeed assume its present shape in the age subsequent to Ezekiel, yet it rests ultimately upon an ancient traditional basis. He would say it was *compiled* at that time, not *composed*, or “produced,” as Wellhausen says. In face of facts such as these, the argument from unanimity for the “assured results” of criticism does not impress one as very convincing.

These considerations may emancipate the inquirer from the bondage which the mind suffers in presuming to examine the soundness of a body of conclusions which are declared to be supported by the unanimous verdict of modern scholarship. Freed from the shackles of this dreaded critical authority, we may dispassionately and without fear approach the subject.

In the discussion of the questions involved, I shall make my appeal to reason against authority, and shall put in a plea against surrendering your judgment to the authority of the great scholars and linguists. My counsel shall be, Beware of accepting such vital conclusions on authority instead of on evidence; exercise the right of private judgment; examine the evidence against, as well as for, this theory; "*Prove all things*, hold fast that which is good," and remember that the burden of proof lies upon those who ask us to revolutionize the beliefs held by the Christian Church for nearly nineteen hundred years, and by the Jewish church for a much longer period.

The advocates of the new opinions inveigh in season and out of season against the influence of authority as represented by tradition, and then, too often, seek to impose upon us the yoke of authority in another and less honorable form. They say in effect, "The question is settled; the great scholars

have decided it: *Schola locuta est, causa finita est.* The debate is closed; there is but one alternative — bow down to the decision of the hierarchy of the critics, or take your place among the despised traditionalists, who are the slaves of theological prejudice.”

The warning of the great Lightfoot is sufficient reply to this magisterial demand:

“The idols of our cave never present themselves in a more alluring form than when they appear as ‘the spirit of the age.’ It is comparatively easy to resist the fallacies of past times, but it is most difficult to escape the infection of the atmosphere in which we live.”¹

¹ “Essays on Supernatural Religion,” p. 23.

LECTURE II

“The modern theory leaves the earlier formative and fundamental periods of the history of Israel almost completely without a literature, in order that it may concentrate all the productive energies of the nation in the age of Ezra.”

PROF. G. T. LADD.

“I may be pardoned for expressing my belief that this kind of investigation is often pursued with an exaggerated confidence. Plausible conjecture is too easily mistaken for positive proof. Undue significance is attached to what may be mere casual coincidences, and a minuteness of accuracy is professed in discriminating between different elements in a narrative which cannot be attained by mere internal evidence. In all writings, but especially in the writings of an age when criticism was unknown, there will be repetitions, contradictions, inconsistencies, diversities of style, which do not necessarily indicate different authorship or dates.”

W. E. H. LECKY.

“Moses has become a shadowy personage whose very existence has been denied; the narratives of Genesis have been turned into fictions; the story of the Exodus has been refuted; and the greater part of the Pentateuch brought down to the age of the Exile.”

PROF. SAYCE.

Prof. Eduard König thus enumerates some of the various forms of the personification-theory in regard to Abraham: he is the personification of a Tribe; he is the personification of ideas; he is one of the native Canaanite forms borrowed by Israel; he is a discrowned deity (einen depotenzierten Gott). See *Neueste Prinzipien der alttestamentlichen Kritik*, 1902, p. 65.

LECTURE II

IN resuming the discussion of the Higher Criticism, let me remind you of the limitation of my subject. My criticism shall be confined to the conclusions, literary and historical, of Wellhausen and those who, since the publication of his great work in 1878, have followed closely in his footsteps. I would not be seriously concerned to challenge the view that the compilers of the Priestly Code merely codified ancient documents which were substantially Mosaic, or of the Mosaic age, — *documents*, observe, not oral traditions, — but it is the theory of the master, not of the pupil, that counts and is the chief matter to be reckoned with. We observe that the accomplished scholars who have contested the alleged results of the Higher Criticism address themselves to the theories and arguments of the Graf-Wellhausen school. We observe, also, that in the critical world generally it is the Wellhausen theory that bulks largest. Even such a scholar as Dillmann is not, we are told, listened to in Germany when he argues that the Priestly Code is a pre-exilic

document, and in his conclusion on this point "he stands almost alone." Dr. Hommel, writing about ten years ago, said, "The new views are pressed home so triumphantly that any attempt to return to the old line seems only worthy of a 'pitying smile.'" ¹

I beg you also to understand that I am not contending against the documentary hypothesis. There is much to be said in favor of the theory of the composite character of the books of the Pentateuch. Neither do I hold a brief for the traditional view of the Mosaic authorship. It is, I conceive, a legitimate subject of inquiry how far these books, in the form that we have them now, proceeded from the hand of Moses, provided they are accepted as authentic accounts of the transactions they record. Nor yet am I arguing the question of how far allegory may be made use of as a legitimate vehicle of divine revelation. In my judgment it is an entire mistake to suppose that the value of the narrative of the Fall, in the book of Genesis, is dependent upon its being accepted as literal history. If we suppose it to be an allegory and not history, the teaching it embodies is just as important, is, in fact, just the same. This view was held by many of the early Christian fathers. Gregory, of Nyssa, describes the account of Paradise and the Fall as

¹ That could not be said so positively to-day.

“ideas in the form of a story.” On this occasion I make no affirmation in regard to these several points. I wish only to make it clear that in challenging the Wellhausen hypothesis, of the books and of the history, these questions are not involved one way or the other.

Let me proceed now, without further preface, to state in outline the analysis of the first six books of the Bible which the Graf-Wellhausen school claim to have established. Taking as our guides some eminent recent representatives of that school, we are informed that the oldest portions of this so-called Hexateuch may be dated about 930 B.C., at the close of Solomon's reign, viz., Genesis xlix. 1-27, Exodus xxi.-xxiii., Numbers xxi. 14, Joshua x. 13, and Numbers xxiii.-xxiv. These fragments were subsequently incorporated in the larger work which had its origin a century later. Leaving these fragmentary pieces on one side, the critics discover four chief sources, or documents, at the basis of the books (J, E, D, P), which were interwoven with each other by a series of editors, and into which were incorporated quite a number of smaller pieces.

The author of J, the Jahvist, lived, they say, in Judah about 850 B.C. The Jehovistic document, however, is really the work of three narrators, J¹, J², J³: J¹ writing about 850 B.C.; J² about 700 B.C.; and J³ about 650 B.C.

One hundred years later, about 750 B.C., a second story-teller took the field, this time in Israel, who receives from the critics the designation E, the Elohist. His work was revised a hundred years later by an Ephraimite (E²). Next we are told these two story-books were united into one history book (JE), and woven together as they now stand, about the year 650 B.C.

Next we come to the writer called D, the author of the book of Deuteronomy. This writer composed that book, according to Wellhausen, about the year 621 B.C. Perhaps we ought to say, parts of the book, for other critics introduce at least two revisers, Dh and Dp, who wrote at a later period; and during the Babylonian Exile amalgamated their several documents, producing Deuteronomy substantially as we have it to-day. Some of the critics place its composition in the reign of Josiah; others in that of Manasseh; others in that of Hezekiah, and others in that of Uzziah. The writer did his work so cleverly that he succeeded in deceiving king and people into the belief that Deuteronomy was the work of Moses many centuries before.

The next step was the combination of the history book JE with Deuteronomy, during the Babylonian Exile (JED), about 540 B.C.

The fourth document in the Hexateuch the critics

call P; that is, the Priestly writing. This corresponds roughly with the sacrificial system contained in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, besides many passages in the book of Genesis. Several writers were successively concerned in it, P¹, P², P³, P⁴, P⁵, etc., to P¹⁰. Begun during the Exile, it was completed and brought to Jerusalem about 444 B.C. Ezra told the people it was "the book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel," though, in fact, it was no such thing, but a pious fraud cleverly composed by some of the priests in exile in Babylon.

Not till about 400 B.C. was this Priest's Code, after receiving many additions (Genesis i.-ii. 4,¹ v., vi.-ix., x.), combined with the previously existing history book (JED), making at length the Hexateuch (JEDP).¹

I may add that Prof. Cornill discovers twenty-six writers, or redactors, who had a hand in the composition of the Hexateuch, and a later writer, author of the Oxford Hexateuch, assures us that there were at least twenty-eight.

Now, I ask, what degree of probability can attach to a theory so elaborately artificial as is embodied in the above analysis? What likelihood is there that modern scholars, two or three thousand years

¹See "Old Testament Critics," Thos. Whitelaw, D.D., pp. 4-14.

after these books were composed, can successfully perform such a feat of literary dissection as is here involved? If these scholars are right, we may truly say that the so-called books of Moses were "framed according to a literary method altogether unparalleled in order to manufacture a history which never was." Some forty years ago, that great scholar, Dean Milman, in writing a preface to a new edition of his "History of the Jews," gave the following weighty judgment in his critique upon Ewald's "Geschichte des Volkes Israel":

"That the Hebrew records, especially the books of Moses, may have been compiled from various documents, is assuredly a legitimate subject of inquiry. But that any critical microscope, in the nineteenth century, can be so exquisite and so powerful as to dissect the whole with perfect nicety, to decompose it, and assign each separate paragraph to its special origin in three, four, or five, or more independent documents, each of which has contributed its part, — this seems to me a task which no mastery of the Hebrew language, no discernment, however fine or discriminating, can achieve."

You will remember that Paley lays the foundation for the truth of the Christian religion upon the antecedent probability of revelation. I think we may lay a solid basis for calling in question the

truth of this hypothesis upon the enormous antecedent improbability which it involves. For my own part, I avow that I would as soon believe that the Apollo Belvedere, and the Venus de Milo, were each the work of twenty or thirty sculptors in different epochs of ancient history, and that our modern expert artists could mark off the parts of those masterpieces which were wrought by each, as I will believe that the exquisite story of Joseph and his brethren (to take but a single example) — a veritable masterpiece of literary art — was the work of a score or more of authors and “redactors,” and that our clever professors of critical anatomy can dissect it, verse by verse, and clause by clause, and distribute the fragments severally to their various writers and compilers. Let me give you a concrete example of this their literary anatomy of that beautiful story. Take, at random, Gen. xlv. 1. We read:

“Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.”

Surely this narrative is like a seamless garment woven from the top throughout! But the critics have no compunction in rending it asunder. They consider it a piece of patchwork. The first half of

verse 1 came, they say, from the source J, the second half of the same verse from the source E. On the other hand, the first half of verse 2 is from the source E, the second half from the source J. The following verses are treated in the same way, but verse 5 is rent into four parts, of which the first and third were assigned to J, and the second and fourth to E. Sometimes you will find the beginning of a verse assigned to one writer, the middle to another, the end to a third! Thus right through this exquisite story, the text is "infinitesimally split up by merely formal criteria."

Surely the canons of art, if not of common sense, may have something to say in such a case. There is such a thing as literary probability and improbability, and I make bold to affirm that the supposition that any critical scalpel is delicate enough, and any critical hand steady enough, and any critical brain omniscient enough to perform such a feat of dissection twenty-five hundred or three thousand years after the date of the work, is a literary improbability raised to the *n*th power! One can only conclude that our critics must have been intoxicated by philology to that degree that their judgment has ceased to be reliable. Festus's exclamation, "Much learning doth make thee mad," would be entirely appropriate in the case of these our Higher Critics, and it could not be successfully gainsaid.

But to proceed. In order to grasp the full significance of the Wellhausen hypothesis we must set before our minds clearly the propositions which it involves. Here are some of them:

(1) The Law (that is, the books of the Law including the greater part of the legislation) is later than the prophets.¹ (2) The book of Deuteronomy is an invention — a fiction — a *pia fraus* — dating from the year 621 B.C. (3) The Priestly Code, involving large parts of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, is of post-exilic origin; it was composed in the time of Ezra and was a work of the imagination of the priestly school. (4) The Mosaic theocracy was never actual until after the Exile. (5) “It reduces a large portion of Israelitish history, up to a short time prior to the Exile, to a mass of legends and uncertain traditions.”² (6) This hypothesis involves the evolutionary view of religion as contradistinguished from the view presented throughout the Holy Scriptures, namely, that religion has its origin in revelation. (7) The religion of Israel, in particular, had its origin, not in a divine revelation, but in a self-evolution, by slow stages, out of heathenism.

¹ “It is no longer possible to regard the Law as a whole as prior to the Prophets; on the contrary, and speaking broadly, the prophetic stage was considerably anterior to the legalistic, this latter not attaining its full development until after the Exile.” — *Contentio Veritatis*, p. 172.

² Dr. Wright.

Now, if the above view of the origin and structure of the early books of the Bible be accepted, it follows that the Jews have been utterly wrong in their view of their own history from its earliest beginnings down to the time of Ezra. It follows further that both the authority of the Pentateuch and the divine origin of Judaism must be abandoned. Wellhausen says, "The substance of the Pentateuch is not historical, but legendary."¹ For it is clear that this analysis of the Pentateuch goes much deeper than mere questions of the date and authorship of the books. It cuts up by the roots the truth of the history narrated. Moses not only did not write the Pentateuch (which, indeed, we do not assert), but he was not the author of the Laws; he did not build the tabernacle or promulgate the sacrificial system in the wilderness. All that was a post-exilic invention a thousand years after the event. If there was any revelation through Moses, we cannot be sure what it was. The patriarchal stories must also be labeled unhistorical. George Adam Smith thinks they may have about the heart of them "historical elements." Dr. J. P. Peters holds that the patriarchs were none of them individuals who actually existed. Moses (as already remarked) was the first historical personage in the story.

¹ Art. "Pentateuch," *Encyc. Brit.*, p. 98.

The critics differ among themselves on the question whether the Pentateuch records any real revelation. Driver and George Adam Smith say "Yes," Kuenen and Wellhausen say "No"! The value of this admission by the former writers will depend, however, on their definition of revelation. George Adam Smith writes, "Revelation is not the promulgation of a law, nor the prediction of future events, nor the imparting to man of truths which he could not find out for himself."¹ To say, then, that there is a revelation from God in the Pentateuch is not to admit that God therein promulgated a law, or gave any power to predict the future, or revealed to Moses, or others, any truths which they could not find out for themselves.

But excluding these ideas of revelation, what remains but natural development of religion under Providential guidance? It is, in fact, difficult to see how the idea of a divine revelation, or of the inspiration of Scripture, in any real sense, can survive, if the preceding account of the structure of these books is once accepted. In that case, not only are the stories of the Fall and of the Deluge destitute of historical foundation, and the patriarchs fictitious characters, but God never spoke to Moses, or ordained the Mosaic statutes. Practically the whole book of Deuteronomy is an invention — a

¹ "Histl. Geography of Holy Land, p. 33.

fiction — composed seven hundred or eight hundred years after the events it undertakes to chronicle. Wellhausen says of these writers of Scripture, that “They completely altered the ancient history,” they “idealized the past to their heart’s content,” and the result was “an artificial and ideal re-creation.” Their books are mostly unhistorical. They were spun out of the inner consciousness of the school of Ezekiel in the time of Ezra. But this is not all. It appears to be an essential element of Wellhausen’s system that the early Israelites were uncivilized nomads; that they not only practised the worship of ancestors, but were worshipers of trees, stones, springs, etc. Fetichism and Totemism prevailed among them. This is another of the “results” we must be prepared to accept if the Graf-Wellhausen school offers the true explanation of the critical problems of the Biblical literature.

Now, that the revelation in the Old Testament is progressive we may certainly recognize,¹ but such

¹ “I am quite prepared to say, with an able English writer, We do not, as is sometimes supposed, argue that it is essentially dangerous and heretical to hold that the ancient legal formularies of Israel may have been re-edited and rearranged at some period subsequent to the Exile. All we say is, there is sufficient evidence to support the belief that they were not materially altered or added to at that period. . . . If the whole of the Pentateuch had been recast, and modernized, and rearranged after the Exile, it would be a matter of no practical moment to us, just as the modernization of the spelling in the Authorized version, or in

a view as this strikes a very serious blow at the reality of the revelation itself. "The opponents of scientific criticism," says a prominent member of the school, "are quite right when they speak of its destructive tendency." If God did not speak to Abraham or to Moses — if there was no Sinaitic covenant — no revelation of the Decalogue — no tabernacle — no sacrificial system in the wilderness — although the Bible affirms all these things; if "the Israelitish religion at first worked itself up out of heathenism by degrees," as Wellhausen says, instead of having its origin in a divine revelation, as the Bible asserts; if, as Kuenen affirms, the Jewish and the Christian religions are no more entitled to be considered of supernatural origin than Buddhism or Islamism; if the Bible in its earlier parts is but a congeries of myths and legends and folk-lore, and if its "histories" are, in fact, written by men who lived from five hundred to a thousand years after the times of which they write, and are the work of writers who, having no definite information, supplied the lack of it "by inventing occur-

the Prayer Book, is a matter of no practical moment. It is only a question of purely academic interest so long as the historic character of its contents is admitted. . . . Two perfectly distinct questions have been mixed up by many . . . the question of editorship, author, and arrangement, and that of substantial historical accuracy." — Rev. J. J. Lias, *Lex Mosaica*, pp. 269, 270.

rences and experiences that never took place"; by setting down speeches and orations that were never spoken, in fact or in substance, as if they had been; and by recording laws "that were not promulgated by the legislators to whom they were assigned," — then the reality of the revelation which the Old Testament has been supposed to record, can hardly be maintained.

The conclusion, indeed, can scarcely be resisted, that if these critical theories shall finally prevail, both the historical truth of the Old Testament, and the supernatural character of the religion it contains, must be abandoned.

Such is the conclusion of that great scholar and historian, Bishop Stubbs, who writes: "Here the crisis becomes most urgent, the issues most imminent, and fatally important. I cannot imagine greater issues than those which these considerations are likely to force upon us. If the result of the present speculations should be the displacement or rejection of any considerable part of the Jewish Law and Record, it would involve the rewriting of the whole of Catholic, of Christian, theology; and, what is more critical still, such an explanation of the way in which the Old Testament Scriptures are used in the New as would call in question the knowledge and honesty of the writers whom we believe to be inspired, and in some matters endanger the

authority of the words reported to be spoken by our Lord." ("Biblical Criticism," p. 11, S. P. C. K., London, 1905.)

We cannot, as Bishop Stubbs suggests, in measuring the significance of these alleged "results," avoid considering their relation to the divine authority and personality of Jesus Christ. We ask how are we to understand his solemn statement, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad," if, as these critics tell us, Abraham never existed? And if in reply we are referred to the doctrine of the *Kenosis*, and asked to believe that in his humiliation he was quite ignorant of the real facts of early Jewish history, we wonder where this *Kenosis* is to stop? Can we rely on his teaching at all? In what sense was he the "Truth"? And why was it that even after his resurrection, when his humiliation was past, and the days of his *Kenosis* should have been past also, did he continue to appeal to the authority of the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms? It is often urged that our Lord could no more have considered the problem of the Higher Criticism than of modern astronomy or geology, and hence that we can infer nothing in regard to the antiquity or authorship, or even the historicity, of the books of the Old Testament from his manner of speaking of them. But surely the matter cannot be thus summarily disposed of. He was, to say the

least, the author and finisher of our faith. He claimed to reveal God and his truth. He interpreted the ancient religion and revelation. Therefore, as has been well pointed out by Prof. Nösgen, he must have studied and rightly estimated the previous stages of the divine revelation; he must have "intuitively penetrated and estimated the integrity and truth of the Scriptures which attest that revelation": consequently he could not "allow to pass as a divine revelation" that which was no revelation but the invention of men; nor could he "recognize as divinely given prophecy" what was nothing but the speculation or imagination of men. "His claim to be the true revealer of God would break down if such mistakes in spiritual and ethical estimate could be brought home to him."¹ The words of an eminent living scholar are pertinent here:

"As Christians we cannot abandon the teaching of Christ, or forget the endorsement of the Old Testament books by the writers of the New. We therefore refuse to seat ourselves as pupils at the feet of critics who, to a large extent, regard the Old Testament histories as mere fictions, and the visions of the Hebrew prophets as only grand poetical imaginations."²

¹ "The New Testament and the Pentateuch," p. 32. C. A. Nösgen, D.D., Professor in Rostock.

² Dr. Chas. H. Wright, Introduction, p. 10.

And Prof. Nösgen puts the case none too strongly when he says:

“He treated, used, and vindicated the legislation of the Pentateuch in all its parts as proceeding from God. Hence there opens up an impassable chasm between the modern critical analysis and the manner in which Jesus esteems and enforces the Law.”¹

Such, then, is this theory of the structure of the earlier books of the Bible, such are its implications, and such its revolutionary consequences to the immemorial beliefs of the Christian and the Jewish churches.

But if the theory is established by sufficient evidence, it must be accepted, be the consequences what they may. But *is* the theory firmly based upon sound reasoning? Is the evidence convincing, — conclusive? I make bold to answer that question in the negative, and first I adduce some *weighty adverse expert opinion*. In the very face of the confident assertions of many of the critics that these conclusions are now regarded as finalities in the field of scholarship, the student of the Bible finds himself perplexed by observing that some very able and scholarly critics hold a contrary opinion. Take, for instance, Wellhausen's conclusion that Deuteronomy was written at the time of its discovery in

¹ *Id.* p. 77. See also pp. 88, 89.

the seventh century B.C., which he says is accepted "in all centres where scientific results may hope for recognition," — and the corollary thereto as stated by Dr. Justi, the orientalist, of Marburg, viz., that the book is "a wholesale perversion of history," "a clumsy forgery" to which "only the narrow-minded can shut their eyes." All this, I say, we find flatly contradicted by such scholars as Dr. Klostermann in his work on the Pentateuch, and Dr. Hommel in "The Ancient Hebrew Tradition." The theory is recognized by all the critics as one of the pillars of Wellhausen's system. Yet Hommel says it is *only* a theory: it has not been proved. And Klostermann declares the Deuteronomic narrative "bears the impress of absolute credibility," and "excludes the possibility of any such deception." Similar is the view of Dr. James Robertson.

Or, take Wellhausen's general scheme of criticism. That brilliant orientalist, Dr. Hommel, undertakes to prove Wellhausen in error in various points, and maintains: (1) That in its beginnings the Israelitish religion was a mixture of ancestral worship and fetichism is negated by the absence of any traces of the same in the language. Philology is against it. (2) The Tel el-Amarna tablets (1430 B.C.) and the Egyptian Minnæan inscriptions indirectly confirm the reliability of the Hebrew tradition, and the existence of pre-Mosaic records. (3) Wellhausen's

view of ancient Hebrew tradition meets an unanswerable argument in the authenticity of Genesis xiv., which he says can no longer be denied. Its alleged exilic date "must be absolutely abandoned." (4) As to the origin and meaning of the name Jehovah. (5) As to the alleged post-exilic date of the Priestly Code, Hommel finds proof of a far earlier date in the absence of Babylonian and Aramaic loan words. (6) The personal names ascribed to patriarchal and Mosaic times, instead of being late exilic inventions, Hommel finds to have been in actual use at those periods and could not have been invented even as late as the time of the Kings. (7) The supposition that the Priestly Code was a post-exilic invention, "having no existence in the time of the prophets," involves in Hommel's view "such a monstrous falsification of tradition between Ezekiel and Ezra as is absolutely incompatible with everything we know of the national characteristics of the Israelites during their previous history." (8) In short, Hommel, writing in 1897, nearly twenty years after the promulgation of Wellhausen's theory, declares that the "Graf-Wellhausen theory is contradicted in various particulars by evidence of the most direct kind, which defies contradiction."

In view of all these utterances of learned and accomplished scholars, the *consensus* of Hebrew scholars, so confidently claimed, appears hardly

justified — even for the Graf-Wellhausen theory as modified and toned down by Dr. Briggs and Dr. Driver.

Turning now from the adverse judgments of particular scholars, let us come to the merits of the case, and note some of the grounds upon which this brilliant and widely dominant hypothesis is to be condemned.

1. Well, first the method by which it is arrived at is inadequate. It is based predominantly on philology, and philology cannot furnish sufficient support — broad enough and deep enough — for so weighty a superstructure. History and archæology must also be used as foundation stones. This argument was urged, intemperately, perhaps, but with great force, by Dr. Emil Reich in *The Contemporary Review* for February and April, 1905. He reminds us that Theseus and Romulus “were murdered by a pack of philologists”; that Lycurgus was by the same class “dissolved into a myth”; that they first robbed Homer of his character, branding him as “an impudent plunderer of other men’s wits,” and finally did him to death, by proving conclusively that he never existed at all! Like considerations were urged by Dean Milman more than a generation ago to the critical theories then in vogue. What he wrote of them may be applied equally to the Graf-Wellhausen theory:

“There seems to be a fatal fallacy in the groundwork of much of their argument. Their minute inferences, and conclusions drawn from slight premises, seem to presuppose an antiquity and perfect accuracy in the existing text, not in itself probable, and certainly utterly inconsistent with the general principles of their criticism. They are in this respect, in this alone, almost at one with the most rigid adherent of verbal inspiration. . . . The argument from language appears to me to be equally insecure, and to be used with great caution and judgment. . . . This criticism must always bear in mind the uncertainty of the received text, which on its own principles . . . it is bound to admit.”¹

2. This theory is condemned also because its whole vast structure rests implicitly upon two decidedly questionable assumptions, viz., that it is a law of the development of religion that ritual tends to grow more and more elaborate, and that in examining the sources of any sacred literature, we may assume that the older sources will, of course, reflect the earlier stages of ritual use. Commenting on this, a writer in the new Jewish Encyclopædia remarks:

“The former is against the evidence of primitive

¹ Milman, “History of the Jews,” Vol. I, Bk. III, note, pp. 177-181. This note was written for the fourth edition, about 1866. It should be read with care.

cultures, and the latter finds no support in the evidence of ritual codes like those of India.”¹ Compare the view of Rawlinson, a high authority in historical investigation: “It does not appear,” says he, “that very simple systems of law and observance do belong to very primitive societies, but rather the contrary. Accadian institutions as revealed to us by the earliest cuneiform inscriptions are very complicated, the regulations of the ancient Phœnician ritual are most minute, and Burekhardt tells us that the great Bedouin community of Arabia has a most carefully elaborated system of social and legal observances, which has descended to it from a remote antiquity, through a long succession of ages.” (Rev. George Rawlinson, M.A., in “*Lex Mosaica*,” p. 29.)

3. The theory is still further discredited by the arbitrary methods of its author. To assure yourself of this, you have only to take down the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and turn to the article “Israel,” by Julius Wellhausen. You will find that, in giving an outline of the history of Israel, he freely reconstructs it at his own sweet will. He is not embarrassed by the Hebrew history books at all. He inserts incidents which the text knows nothing of — for example, that there was a battle on the shores of the Red Sea between the Egyptians

¹ See Art. “Pentateuch,” Vol. IX, p. 592, by Joseph Jacobs.

and the Israelites. On the other hand he arbitrarily rejects the testimony of the Hebrew text; and again urges arguments as based upon the narrative, which the narrative does not support. One of his arguments against the Mosaic authorship of the Decalogue is that Moses clearly did not object to graven images, inasmuch as he "made a brazen serpent which down to Hezekiah's time continued to be worshiped at Jerusalem as an image of Jehovah."¹ I ask, Is a writer who can thus boldly and completely misrepresent the historical facts in his search for an argument, — is such an author a reliable guide in the study of the Scriptures?

Another example of Wellhausen's arbitrary method may be given. He declares magisterially that the principle of "One God, one Sanctuary" was never heard of in Jewish history till the time of Josiah. Yet the books of Samuel and the Kings testify clearly to the contrary. Why, then, is their testimony not to be received? "The view is unhistorical," replies Wellhausen. In what way? Because subsequent history shows that the high places were not removed. In other words, the Law could not have existed, because it was violated! But upon what testimony is Wellhausen convinced that Josiah established the one central sanctuary? On the

¹ Art. "Israel," p. 399.

testimony of that same book of Kings, whose statements he has just declared unhistorical.

In further illustration of the arbitrary methods of the Wellhausen school, I now direct your attention to a passage in Dr. Driver's edition of the book of Genesis. Commenting on Genesis x. 22, where Elam is mentioned as one of "the children of Shem," Dr. Driver says:

"Racially the Elamites were entirely distinct from the Semites . . . It is true, inscriptions recently discovered seem to have shown that in very early times Elam was peopled by Semites . . . and that the non-Semitic Elamites spoken of above only acquired mastery over it at a period approaching 2300 B.C., but the fact is not one which the writer of the verse is very likely to have known."

Now, what is the natural inference from these inscriptions which archæology has brought to light? Surely it is a confirmation of the accuracy of the statement of Genesis that Elam was one of the descendants of Shem! Surely, also, we naturally infer from this archæological fact that "the book of Genesis quotes documents, or reports conditions, at least as old as 2300 B.C.," and this strengthens our confidence in the antiquity and accuracy of the narratives in that book. Why, then, does not Dr. Driver draw these obvious inferences? "Because," replies the Dean of Canterbury, to whom I am

indebted for this example, "he is possessed by the theory, which is one of 'the assured results' of which he speaks, that the verse belongs to the portions of the chapter assigned to the source P, which he considers belongs to the age of Ezekiel and the Exile, or nearly two thousand years after the date when Elam was peopled by Semites." I do not wonder that Dr. Wace exclaims, "It would surely be difficult to find a more perverse piece of criticism!"¹

4. This theory, I have said, is insecure because built upon too narrow a foundation — viz., philology. But the philological argument is not by any means wholly on one side. Prof. Margoliouth has turned the sword of philology against the Graf-Wellhausen critics. Here is a meager outline of his argument:² One of the books of the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus, was written by Ben-Sira.

(1) The book was originally written in Hebrew.

(2) The original has been lost; but

(3) The Talmud contains some thirty or forty quotations from it.

(4) The grandson of Ben-Sira translated the work of his grandfather into Greek.

(5) The age when the grandson lived is known;

(6) And thereby it is placed beyond doubt that the date of Ecclesiasticus is about 200 B.C.

¹ The *Churchman*, London, July, 1905, p. 505.

² By Maxwell M. Ben-Oliel.

(7) Besides this Greek version we have another in Syriac, and others in Latin, Armenian, Æthiopic, etc.

(8) The language in which Ben-Sira wrote his proverbs is not the language of the Biblical period, nor that of the post-exilic prophets; it is the new Hebrew of the Mishna.

(9) The difference between the Hebrew of Ben-Sira and that of the Old Testament writers is marked in every one of the seven ways in which language travels.

(10) Therefore a long period of time lies between the writers of the Bible and the time of Ben-Sira; and

(11) As the date of Ben-Sira is 200 B.C., the latest writers of the Old Testament must be placed back hundreds of years to allow for the vast changes in the language as we find it in Ben-Sira's days.

To use Prof. Margoliouth's own language:

“If by 200 B.C. the whole Rabbinic farrago, with its terms and phrases and idioms and particles, was developed, and was the classical language of Jerusalem, and the medium for prayer and philosophical and religious instruction and speculations, then between Ben-Sira and the books of the Old Testament there must lie centuries, nay, there must lie, in most cases, the deep waters of the captivity, the grave of the old Hebrew and the old Israel, and the womb of the new Hebrew and the new Israel.”¹

¹ Inaugural Lecture, Oxford, 1889, p. 21.

5. Another serious blow to the accuracy of Wellhausen has been given by Dr. Fritz Hommel in the demonstration of the important fact "that the numerous personal names ascribed to patriarchal and Mosaic times were in general use at this very period; and could not have been invented in or after the time of the Kings — when a totally different system of nomenclature obtained." Wellhausen has said, "The long lists of names in Numbers i., vii., and xiii. are nearly all cast in the same mold, and are in no way similar to genuine ancient personal names." Dr. Hommel's refutation of this assertion should be carefully read, *Id.* pp. 119 and 297.

6. But the most important, perhaps, of all the considerations which show the unsoundness of Wellhausen's theory is, that it is contradicted by the history which all parties to this discussion accept as authentic. The palmary argument for his views is the correspondence between the law and the history. He alleges a threefold correspondence: the Books of the Covenant (Ex. xx.-xxiii. and xxxiv. 10, 14-26), with the history down to Josiah's reformation; the book of Deuteronomy with the history after that reformation; and the Priestly Code with the history after the Exile.

It is this third instance of correspondence which Wellhausen has, it is alleged, been the first to establish on a firm basis. Now it has been shown,

I think, conclusively that his theory breaks down in this its most conspicuous feature; that is to say, that his hypothesis of the origin of the Priestly Code in the time of Ezra, 444 B.C., does not correspond with the history. He bids us read the account of the publication (or republication) of the Law as recorded in Nehemiah viii.-x., and note the fact that when the book is read aloud to the people its contents were unfamiliar to them — were in fact new, and then he argues that it could not have been known previously, and must have had its origin at that time, or very shortly before.

But observe what is involved in this method of argument. The book then read to the people was, according to Wellhausen, the whole Pentateuch. Now the Pentateuch embraced the Books of the Covenant and the book of Deuteronomy, each of which contained laws which are (if we are to believe the critics of this school) in direct conflict with the laws of the so-called Priestly Code. But the Books of the Covenant (see Exodus xx. 24), they say, legalize altars and sacrifices, anywhere and in how many places soever, while the Priestly Code limits them to one altar in the Temple at Jerusalem. Again, Deuteronomy gives to all Levites the prerogatives of the priesthood, but the Priestly Code excludes the Levites from the priesthood. Is it conceivable, then, that the priests, who had fabricated

this Priestly Code in their own interest, would have published as canonical at the same time these two codes, the Books of the Covenant and Deuteronomy, which impose, with all the authority of the name of Moses, laws which are in direct conflict with the very code which they have taken so much pains to clothe with the Mosaic dress in order to secure the weight of his venerable name?

But this is not all. Wellhausen affirms that the Books of the Covenant had been in existence since about 900 B.C., and the book of Deuteronomy since 623 B.C., and yet he admits that when the Pentateuch, which embraced both these codes, was read to the people by Ezra, its contents were evidently new to the people. It follows that unfamiliarity with a legal code does not necessarily prove that the code itself was new, but only that it had been lost or forgotten. Hence it is not to be concluded that the Priestly Code, either, was something *new* merely because it was unfamiliar when read to the people by Ezra in 444 B.C. It may, like the other two codes, have been of ancient origin, but have become forgotten in the lapse of time and the conditions of the captivity.

Thus this much vaunted argument of the correspondence between the law and the history breaks down completely.

Let me now, in conclusion, sum up the results of this lecture. The theory of the dominant school of critics as to the origin and character of the Pentateuch has been shown to be burdened with an immense antecedent improbability, besides involving consequences destructive of the authority and credibility of the books, — destructive also of the divine origin of the Jewish religion and of the divine authority of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been shown that, in spite of the great weight of modern scholarship which has been thrown into the scale in its favor, this theory is stoutly contested by a group of very accomplished scholars. Then we have seen that, taken on its merits, there are a number of cogent reasons for rejecting this popular hypothesis: as these, (1) It is built too exclusively on philology; history and archæology being not sufficiently recognized as factors in the problem. (2) It relies on two assumptions, of very doubtful validity. (3) It is discredited by the arbitrary methods of its author and his followers. (4) Philology itself furnishes a valid argument against it. (5) Archæology supplies another. (6) It is out of harmony with the accepted history of the periods at which the books are alleged to have had their origin.

Of course, my limits have forbidden my attempting more than a meager outline of the arguments which are brought forward in refutation of this

elaborate theory, but I hope enough of the argument against it has been developed to make it clear to your minds that it is far indeed from offering that conclusive proof which alone would entitle it to acceptance. For let me again remind you that when we are asked to adopt views of the nature and structure of Holy Scripture which are nothing less than revolutionary, we are entitled to demand proof, clear, positive, unassailable, conclusive.¹ We cannot lightly barter away our birthright. We cannot surrender the belief inherited from the Christian ages, and supported by the authority of Christ himself, in the antiquity and authority of the Pentateuch, at the challenge of a theory, which is at best supported by nothing better than plausible arguments, and which is open to the very serious objections which we have seen may be brought against it.

¹ It is admitted by some of the advocates of the dominant theory, that the spade of the archæologist may any day undermine and discredit it fatally. Thus the Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Gibson, writes:

“Fresh discoveries may any day be made which will upset the dominant theory, and so long as the spade of the explorer is at work, and new facts come to light, the conclusions of the critics must be subject to review.” This is a naïve confession of the subjective character of the criticism on which the theory is built. Yet it is constantly put forward as “an assured result,” to the distress of multitudes of souls, and the disturbance of the faith of not a few.

LECTURE III

“Οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι οὓς ἐλάλησε Μωυσῆς παντὶ Ἰσραὴλ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ.” Deut. i. 1.

“The newer criticism not merely offers to correct particular points in the narrations of the Old Testament, which would be comparatively admissible, but it pronounces the whole representation of Old Testament history, as we read it in the Bible, and as Jesus read it and acknowledged it, to be false. It further describes the books of the Old Testament as having been produced, almost without exception, by a series of editings, curtailments, augmentations and dislocations of the original text; so that the resulting Scriptures come before us with a character which is the very reverse of trustworthiness.”

PROF. LOTZ of *Erlangen*.

“Clouds which are formed in the time of grandsires are not in the habit of raining upon grandsons. Could people not write in preexilic times? Must they not be allowed to write? Why tear with violence the pen from the hand of the ancient Israelitish priests?”

BREDENKAMP.

“The question is whether the palm of ingenuity is to be assigned to the writers of these books or to the modern critics; whether a school composed of men like Ezekiel and Ezra were likely to have, with boundless inventiveness, concocted all this history, or our modern critics are ransacking the treasures of their wits to find an artificial explanation of a thing that is much more simple than they make it?”

DR. JAS. ROBERTSON.

LECTURE III

HITHERTO I have adduced considerations, for the most part of a general nature, to show the inconclusiveness of the arguments by which the modern theory of the origin and character of the Pentateuch is supported. I now propose to come to closer quarters with the subject, upon some of the cardinal points at issue, and to indicate some of the lines of defense of the belief of the Christian Church in the antiquity and authority of these venerable books as against the views of the dominant school of critics. I shall first take up the argument from the contents of the writings of the prophets Amos and Hosea (of the eighth century B.C.) and of Ezekiel (of the sixth century), and then I shall take up, somewhat more at length, the Deuteronomy problem, which may be considered the pivot of the whole theory against which I contend.

Linguistic arguments I shall pass by as the special province of experts in philology, but the historical issue ought to be intelligible to us all, and it would

seem that historical considerations must be decisive of the chief matters in question.

Now, just as the apologist for Christianity a generation ago found firm ground for his defense of Christianity in the first four Epistles of St. Paul, whose genuineness could not be denied by their opponents, so we may find in the extant writings of Amos, Hosea, and Ezekiel a sound basis for our argument against the theory that the book of Deuteronomy is a tissue of fictions dating from about 621 B.C., and that the Priestly Code (large parts of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers) was also a legendary work of the time of Ezra. All the great doctrines of Christianity can be established from the undisputed Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians; and in like manner the main facts of Jewish history, and the main institutions of the so-called Mosaic legislation, can be established as the accepted beliefs of the Jews in their times, from the books of Amos, Hosea, and Ezekiel, which the critics generally acknowledge to be genuine and authentic.

We open these prophetic writings, then, and ask, Do they support the Graf-Wellhausen theory of the date and character of the early books of the Bible? The English reader will be quite able, by careful scrutiny, I think, to see that they do not support it. He will find that these acknowledged writings of the eighth century B.C. — I mean Amos and Hosea

— presuppose much of the history and many of the institutions of the Pentateuch, just as the writings of the early Fathers presuppose the Gospels. And although the famous saying that, if the Gospels had been lost, they could be reconstructed out of the writings of the Fathers, could not be paralleled in the case of the Prophets and the Pentateuchal history, yet we *can* say that enough of that early history is found imbedded in these prophetic books to convince us of the unreliability of the theory that the Prophets are older than the Law, and that those books which the Church has for nineteen hundred years believed to be historical, are in reality (save a very trifling residuum of history) the work of priestly legend-spinners in the age of Ezra. Let me here avail myself of the words of a writer who seems to me to have dealt the theories of the negative critics a blow almost as crushing as was dealt the author of "Supernatural Religion" some fifteen years ago by the great Lightfoot, — I mean Prof. Robertson of Glasgow. He says, "Amos and Hosea are found to hold essentially, for the period succeeding Moses, the same scheme of history which is by modern critics pronounced to be late and unhistorical." "I take it that the views of Israel's past history given by the prophets of the eighth century (B.C.) were the views entertained by the nation generally in their time. These views, so far as they amount to

a comprehensive conception of the history as a whole, agree exactly with the views of the Hebrew historians, and so far as reference is made to actual occurrences in the history, the prophets are at one with the historians. The great landmarks are clearly traceable: the deliverance from Egypt, the guidance in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, the continuance of God-guided men in the nation, the preëminence of the house of David.”

Another able writer, Prof. Stanley Leathes, adduces forty-five allusions to the books of Moses in the prophet Amos, and concludes, “There is apparent acquaintance with and reference to each book of the Pentateuch in this prophet. What is there to show that the apparent acquaintance was not real and that the references were not intentional? (The Priestly Code is implied in ii. 4, 7, 8, 12; iv. 4, 5; v. 12, 21, 22; ix. 4, etc.; and yet Amos flourished in the former half of the eighth century B.C.”

Allusions are found in Amos to the Exodus, the overthrow of Sodom, the gigantic stature of the Amorites, the sacrifices of the Law, the Nazarite vow, etc. “Thus Amos presupposes that his hearers were well acquainted with the Pentateuch, and had a firm belief in its history: otherwise much of the prophecy would have lost its force, or have been unintelligible.”¹

¹ “The Law and the Prophets,” p. 160.

Similar are the phenomena in the prophecy of Hosea, another prophet of the eighth century B.C. He alludes to God's "covenant" with Israel, and to his "Law." In viii. 12 ("though I wrote for him the ten thousand things of my Law"), the prophet alludes to a copious written law of divine authority. See also viii. 13, ix. 10, xi. 1, 5; xii. 9, and xiii. 4.

I may here refer to an important essay by the same writer upon the eighth century B.C., in the volume entitled "Lex Mosaica," 1894, in which the writer says, "It seems impossible to set aside the multiplicity of evidence which is found in Hosea of his acquaintance with every book of the Pentateuch. This evidence is not obtrusive and superficial, but it is latent, and yet conspicuous when attention is drawn to it. Nothing but blind attachment to a favorite hypothesis can make us insensible to the manifold indications of familiarity with the language, the promises, the threatenings, and the history of the books of Moses."

The writer then directs attention to the internal evidence that Hosea was familiar with the book Deuteronomy two centuries before the time which the critics assign to its composition. Hosea shows familiarity also with the history of Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers, and makes such "reference to the books of Samuel, Judges, and Joshua as can only

be explained by supposing him to have had those documents before him." He concludes thus:

"Repeated consideration of these passages has served to convince me that the late origin of the Law in the time of the Exile, or later, is a pure fiction."

THE ARGUMENT FROM EZEKIEL

This prophet is considered by Kuenen and Wellhausen as the father of Judaism, the real creator of the Priestly and Levitical system as we find it in the Pentateuch. He and his "school" are declared to have "attributed, with innocence and satisfaction, fictions and codes which were the growth of ages to God by the immediate instrumentality of Moses and Aaron." It is even asserted by Wellhausen that the paternity of the Levitical Code is so clearly Ezekiel's that to deny it is to incur ridicule as a person incompetent to understand critical processes.¹

Nevertheless, the argument against it appears to not a few able and competent critics conclusive. It is pointed out that the chapters (xl. to xlvi.) in Ezekiel can only be made to support the theory by treating one part as a practical programme and the other as an ideal picture. Two thirds of it being "clearly ideal," how can the other third be

¹ "The Early Religion of Israel," p. 430.

treated as a "serious historical programme"? If the measurements of the temple and of the Holy Land and the situation of the tribes are not to be taken as matters of fact, why should what he says of the ritual and the ordinances of worship be so treated?

Again, it is urged that it is immensely improbable that men like Ezekiel should have "invented a false historical setting for the laws of the Levitical Code, by carrying them back to Moses and the desert, simply in order to give the Law higher sanction." According to this theory there never was a tabernacle, and the other chief early institutions were equally of fictitious origin — the fruit of the "legend-spinning invention" of men of the post-exilic period.

But to come to closer quarters with the comparison between Ezekiel and the Priestly Code in the Pentateuch, it is pointed out (*a*) that the two have a different theological standpoint; (*b*) that they live in different worlds, — there is in the latter no complexion of later history, or later allusion; the two use different vocabularies; the atmosphere is different; the style is sharply contrasted; the idolatry-legislation contains no allusion to the more modern forms of idolatrous worship. In a word, the *prima facie* view of the two writings "would on any rule of literary analogy place them ages wide apart." (*c*) A strong evidence of the antiquity

of the P document is the accuracy of its local references to Egypt and the Peninsula of Sinai. It is free from the slips which could not but characterize it, had it been written in Babylonia in that late age. It shows an archæological accuracy in the use of terms, words, linens, etc. "With the Priestly school working thus with a free hand, and giving the reins to their fancy, as this theory demands, it would be quite unnatural not to find in their writing some trace of the influence of Ezekiel and of Babylonia, and their exilic and post-exilic surroundings; equally unnatural to find continuous traces of quite other and different and more ancient surroundings in the very work which is due to their pure imagination. A study of their supposed writing has been shown to indicate, in very prominent particulars, no traces of Ezekiel or Babylonia, but distinct traces of Egypt and the desert." (*d*) It is further urged that a careful study of Ezekiel shows that he was well acquainted with P, for he "not only uses the expressions of the Priest's Code," but writes as one whose mind was impregnated with them, and he takes for granted a familiarity therewith on the part of the people whom he addressed. These are a few of the matters found in Ezekiel which are urged as negating the theory of Wellhausen that the P document — that is a large part of the Pentateuch — was the creation of an Ezekiel

school of priests in the post-exilic period. My purpose, of course, is only to indicate the lines of defense against this attack upon the historical character of the Pentateuch, believing that these arguments as presented by Prof. James Robertson in his "Early Religion of Israel" and by several writers in "Lex Mosaica" (1884) are of great force, and go far towards overthrowing the theory above described.¹

THE DEUTERONOMY PROBLEM

The importance of the problem presented by the book of Deuteronomy in the critical controversy is of the first order. Its origin about 621 B.C. is recognized on all hands as one of the pillars of Wellhausen's system, though it did not, of course, originate with him. Accordingly he is (*suo more*) very dogmatic in asserting the finality of the hypothesis on that point. This is his language:

"In all centers where scientific results may hope for recognition, it is admitted that Deuteronomy was written at the time at which it was discovered."

Dr. Driver is equally positive in asserting that the

¹ I would refer here to "Sanctuary and Sacrifice," by W. L. Baxter, D.D. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1895). It refutes the Graf-Wellhausen theories by patient inductive proof. Mr. Gladstone said of some of his essays, "Unless your searching inquiry can be answered, Wellhausen's character, both literary and theological, is destroyed."

book is “by unanimous consent” of critical scholars assigned without hesitation to a late date.

Yet this view is stoutly contested by such scholars as Klostermann, Hommel, Köhler, Robertson, and Delitzsch.

We are entitled, then, to demand the proofs of this assertion that this venerable book had its origin in the reign of Josiah, some eight hundred years after the time of Moses, and was, therefore, “a downright forgery on a grand scale” — to use Hommel’s phrase.

Well, in the first place, the passage in 2 Kings xxii. is appealed to, where we are told of the discovery in the Temple, by Hilkiah, of the book of the Law. But you will observe here that the sacred historian gives us no intimation that the book then found, whether Deuteronomy or the whole Pentateuch, was *then* first composed, but rather clearly implies that the King and the people believed it to be, in whole or in part, the ancient book of the Law. On what ground, then, do these critics base their assertion, or their inference, that the book then found was recently composed? They base it on the assumption that since its contents came as a surprise and shock to the King and the priests and the people, it must have been an unknown book to them, and therefore a book recently written. But this assumption is by no means self-evident. It is not axiomatic.

It requires proof. We demand, why might it not be a book of ancient origin which had been *lost and forgotten*? Seventy-four years before the discovery of this book, Manasseh ascended the throne of Judah, and very soon directed all his energies with fanatical zeal to extirpate the worship of Jehovah and establish in its stead idolatry in manifold forms. He even set up an idol in the Temple itself. It was a reign of terror for the adherents of the Mosaic religion. Would it be strange if the few copies of the books of the Law had disappeared during the seventy-five years of religious persecution, and that the terrible denunciations of the book of Deuteronomy had been forgotten by priest and people?

But observe here the strange inconsistency of the Wellhausen school. They acknowledge that the two so-called Books of the Covenant, Exod. xx.-xxiii. and xxxiv. 10, 14-26, wrought together into the sources JE, are to be dated before the Major Prophets. Now if you examine these passages you will find that they contain strong prohibitions of idolatry and denunciations of the divine judgment upon those who worshiped any other God but Jehovah alone. For instance, "He that sacrificeth unto any God, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed" (xxii. 20). King Josiah, therefore, had he known these Books of the Covenant, would have learned from them, as plainly as from

Deuteronomy, the divine displeasure and the divine threatenings against idolatry. It would seem, then, that he was as ignorant of the former as he was of the latter. Consequently, by the rule of the critics, applied to Deuteronomy, the two Books of the Covenant could not have been of ancient origin — they, too, must have been recently composed. But instead of this they tell us the Books of the Covenant were very ancient, perhaps even Mosaic in origin. By parity of reason, then, Deuteronomy, too, may be of similarly ancient origin.

Another inconsistency of theirs has been pointed out in this connection. They argue (very inconclusively, as I think) from Exodus xx. 24 that Moses allowed the building of altars and the offering of sacrifices everywhere. Yet they say the author of Deuteronomy assumed the name of *Moses* in order to secure acceptance for a book which forbids but one altar, and makes sacrifice unlawful anywhere except on that one altar at Jerusalem! This first proof, then, turns out to be only a conjecture built upon another conjecture. That is to say, the theory is destitute of external support. Ewald's hypothesis that it was written in Egypt is worth just as much and just as little.

Let us come, then, to the internal evidence relied on to destroy the historical value of the fourth book of the Pentateuch.

(a) Great stress is laid, first of all, on the fact that the book contains a prospective provision for changing the republican, or theocratic, form of government into a monarchical form. But when we remember that Israel was probably the only people who in the time of Moses were not ruled by a monarch, why should not Moses have foreseen that, in time, Israel, too, would desire a king? And on the principles of a believer in revelation, why should not the future contingency have been revealed to the divinely commissioned leader and lawgiver of the chosen people? And, on the other hand, on what principle can we explain a writer of the age of Josiah, after the monarchy had been so long established, and when that form of government was universal, representing Israel as having had a republican, or theocratic, form of government?

(b) Again it is urged as unhistorical that Moses should have set forth in detail and at length the evils and inconveniences of kingly rule, as Deuteronomy represents him as doing, at a time when they were not governed by a king. But, it is answered, would it be any more natural or to be expected, as Wellhausen's theory demands, that a writer in the time of Josiah, when the monarchy had long been firmly established, and when from no quarter do we hear any hint or suggestion of popular government, should paint in lurid colors

the evils and oppressions to be expected from kingly rule?

(c) Another argument for the late date of this book is found in the fact that it contains alterations and modifications of the Law as established in the other so-called Mosaic legislation. But was it not natural that the changed circumstances of the people, having the desert life behind them, and standing on the verge of their entry into the walled cities and cultivated fields of Canaan, should have made necessary, or at least desirable, some considerable changes in legislation?

(d) The argument, however, on which Wellhausen chiefly relies, is that the law of the one sanctuary as set forth in Deuteronomy was unknown until the days of Josiah. The principle of "One God — one sanctuary," he says, was "never heard of till Josiah." He finds no evidence of it in the history down to that period. And yet the books of Samuel and Kings testify to the contrary. To give one instance, 1 Kings iii. 2, 3, in mentioning that sacrifices were offered on the high places, distinctly alludes to this being in conflict with the law of the one sanctuary. See also, 2 Kings xviii. 4-6. These critics, however, are not embarrassed by this evidence. They ascribe such passages to a "Deuteronomic revision" of the books of Kings. That is to say, the witnesses are reliable when they testify in their favor, but

their veracity is promptly impeached, if their testimony is on the other side! See now Wellhausen's colossal inconsistency. With great emphasis, and complete confidence, he argues that the law of the one sanctuary was not observed until Josiah's time, and argues from this that it is inconceivable that such a law had any existence. And then he proceeds to acknowledge, in the next breath, that after the death of Josiah the law ceased to be observed. In the very next reign there were "*almost as many altars as towns!*" Non-observance of the law in the epoch after Moses is proof irrefragible that no such law existed in Moses's time, but non-observance of the law after the death of Josiah does not prove the non-existence of the law in Josiah's time. Such a logical inconsistency well deserves to be called colossal!

(e) Yet another argument relied on to destroy the historic credibility of Deuteronomy is that it outlines a programme of legislation that in important particulars was never carried out. In answer to this I would direct your attention to the weighty words of Dean Milman, discussing a similar theory nearly fifty years ago. He writes: "Now a *prospective Utopia* in the mind of a man of consummate wisdom like Moses is intelligible, especially at the time of the occupation of a whole country by a conquering tribe, and its partition among the

conquerors. But a *retrospective Utopia*, purely imaginary, as an afterthought of later times, and attributed to Moses, when it was known never to have been carried into effect, seems a strange assumption."¹

What conceivable motive could there be for a late writer or compiler to attribute such visionary and unreal schemes to the great lawgiver?

(f) But again: Wellhausen argues with great force and plausibility the threefold correspondence of the Law with the history of Israel. As to Deuteronomy, it is argued that the law it contains corresponds with the history of Josiah's reign; in fact, that it was composed with a view to bring about the reformation which actually occurred at that time, of which we have an account in 2 Kings xxii.

But a careful study of the contents of the book will show that it does not fit the history, and that many of its provisions were not adapted for the time or the circumstances of the people in the reign of Josiah. Let me enumerate as briefly as possible some of the features which are in conflict with this theory. The reformation of King Josiah was a religious reformation; but the legislation of Deuteronomy pertains in great part to the civil sphere. The chief emphasis — we might almost say the exclusive emphasis — of the king's reform was laid

¹ "History of the Jews," pp. 206, 207.

on the abolition of idolatry; but the leading feature in the book of Deuteronomy is the centralization of worship — the abolition of all altars save the one in Jerusalem. In the seventh century B.C. the kingdom of Judah was in an advanced state of organization; but the legislation of Deuteronomy was of a general nature, — a mere outline sketch, — unsuited to the stage of development attained by that time. Note, also, a number of particular injunctions entirely unsuited to the conditions and environment of Josiah's reign. Why, for instance, should a writer of the seventh century introduce repeated injunctions to destroy the Canaanites and raze their fortified cities, when they had ceased to exist as a people? Why, again, should he command that the Amalekites should be utterly exterminated as a retribution for their opposition to Israel in the wilderness, eight centuries before, when, in fact, there were no longer any Amalekites to be found in the land? (A comparison of Deut. xxv. 17-19 with 1 Sam. xxx. 1, 17, shows that the former must antedate the time of Saul. The destruction of a small remnant of Amalek, recorded in 1 Chron. iv. 41-43, is not in conflict with this conclusion.) These are some of the particulars in which we see that the actual character and contents of Deuteronomy are quite out of harmony with the supposition of its origin in the seventh century.

But let us turn to the other side of the argument. What is to be said in favor of the early date and the historic truth of the book of Deuteronomy?

Now at the outset let it be clearly understood that I am not contending for the Mosaic authorship of the book as it stands, though I think it altogether likely that Moses was its author, but for the substantial antiquity and integrity of the book, and its substantial historical accuracy. Alterations in the text — modifications in certain parts — we not only do not question, but would be forward to assert; but these are not of sufficient importance to impair the historic truth of the narrative as a whole.

In brief, then, these are some of the considerations which sustain that view:

1. It is altogether natural, and to be expected, that the great lawgiver should have given such farewell counsel as we find here, and that on the eve of the conquest of Canaan he should have left on record such a recapitulation and codification of the laws which lie in the text of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, in some confusion, without order, and mixed up with the history of the people in the wilderness.

2. We find traces of Deuteronomy long before the seventh century, as in the account in 2 Kings xviii. 4-6 of the reformation of Hezekiah. That monarch removed the high places and the altars

outside of the Jewish capital, and bid the people worship at one altar only. We find this reflected in the words of the Rabshakeh to the messengers of Hezekiah:

“But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God, is it not he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before *this* altar in Jerusalem.”

Here we have the most prominent principle of the Deuteronomic legislation distinctly recognized, viz., the centralization of worship at Jerusalem. Another trace of Deuteronomy is found in the reign of King Amaziah, 797 B.C., by comparing 2 Kings xiv. 6 with Deuteronomy xxiv. 16. Yet another is found in comparing Joshua viii. 30, etc., with Deuteronomy xxvii. 1, etc.

Further: it would seem that Amos and Hosea, prophets of the eighth century B.C., were acquainted with Deuteronomy. Compare Hosea iv. 4 with Deuteronomy xvii. 12; and Hosea iv. 14 with Deuteronomy xxiii. 18; and Hosea v. 10 with Deuteronomy xix. 14; also Amos iv. 4 with Deuteronomy xiv. 28.

Jeremiah also was acquainted with the law of centralization of worship, for he tells us that Jehovah set his name in Shiloh before the choice of Jerusalem (chap. vii. 12), which corresponds with what we read in 1 Samuel i.-iii., where Shiloh actually appears as

the central sanctuary. Elkanah betakes himself there year by year in order to pray and offer sacrifice, and all the people resort there to offer sacrifice, and the sons of Eli stand in a relation to all Israel. There also was the ark of the covenant, the pledge and witness of the presence of the God of Israel.

From this, as Wilhelm Möller has pointed out, it follows that the Deuteronomic requirement of a central sanctuary was already in force in the time of the Judges. The idea is also certainly harmonious with the history of the wanderings in the wilderness and the passage of the Jordan.

3. Another argument which has much force is that this book, whether Deuteronomy only, or the entire Pentateuch, was accepted so readily as authentic and authoritative by king and priests and people. Though it bore with such crushing weight on the habits and the life and the worship both of priests and people — though it touched their property and their livelihood, yea their very life, in its denunciation of the death penalty upon idolaters, yet we hear of no challenge of its genuineness as the law of God by his servant Moses. The modern theory requires us to make two assumptions, of very doubtful validity: first, that such a colossal deception as the theory postulates should be undertaken by good men, in the fear of God; and second, that it should meet with such complete and unchallenged

success. Dean Milman says with great force, "It would have been inconceivable audacity in the priesthood, and equally inconceivable blindness and stupidity in the king and people, to have been imposed upon by a book written but a few years before, and now presented and received by them as the ancient and authoritative Law." (History of the Jews, Vol. I, Bk. VIII, Note, p. 435. Fourth edition.)

4. Then again we are to consider the complexion of the narrative of Deuteronomy, the tone and color of the events it describes, the marks of a time far more antique in manners than the time of Josiah; we are to ask ourselves whether the atmosphere we breathe here is not the atmosphere of the desert rather than of the great city, whether the dress and bearing of the characters that move on this stage do not bespeak an earlier, a more primitive time rather than that of the dwellers in a great city in a highly developed stage of civilization.

It is said, indeed, by some critics that this verisimilitude is not real, but assumed: — the late writer has clothed his book in Mosaic garb; he has given it the appearance of antiquity, and by this means he was able to impose it upon king and people as indeed the work of the great lawgiver.

But before accepting that as a probable supposition, we have to consider, over and above the moral

improbability of such a gross deception, whether it would have been possible for a writer of Josiah's time to so perfectly simulate the time and the manners and the spirit of the Mosaic age as the author of Deuteronomy has done. Remember that there lay a tract of more than eight centuries between him and the age into which he was to throw back his composition. His task was, on the supposition of these critics, similar to that of a romancer of our day who should undertake to write a book which should reproduce the life, and the language, and the manners, and the thought of the age of William the Conqueror, and to do this without being betrayed into anachronisms, or geographical or other inaccuracies, above all without failing to give to his picture the tone and color of the time. Only his work would be unspeakably more difficult, for, unlike the writer of our day, he could not draw upon the stored treasures of archæology in some great library to secure himself against erroneous conceptions of the age he was seeking to picture. I avail myself here again of the language of Dean Milman:

“Strange,” says he, “if a late imaginative writer should preserve this singular accuracy — if I may so say, this naturalness of detail . . . Read the book of Deuteronomy, and fairly estimate the difficulties which occur — and that there are difficulties I acknowledge, such as the appointment

at this time of Ebal and Gerizim as the scene of the rehearsal of the Law by Moses, or a writer on the other side of Jordan, . . . though one cannot suppose Moses or the Israelites at that time unacquainted with the main features, the general topography of Cis-Jordanic Palestine. Then read it again, and endeavor to assign it to any other period in the Jewish annals, and judge whether difficulties do not accumulate twenty-fold. In this case, how would the signs of that period have inevitably appeared — anachronisms, a later tone of thought, of incident, of manners! Even at this special point, at what period would Ebal and Gerizim have been chosen as the two equal antagonistic centers of Jewish reverence and sanctity? If it is a fiction, it is certainly a most felicitous one.” (*Id.* p. 253.)

5. Yet again. The antiquity of Deuteronomy has striking external support in the fact that it is found as one of the books of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Would the Samaritans have accepted a new book — never heard of till the reign of Josiah, a monarch of the rival kingdom of Judah — accepted such a book, I say, and placed it among their sacred books of the Law? When we consider the acute jealousy between the Jews and the Samaritans, is it not far more likely that they would have rejected it, and proclaimed themselves the guardians of the purity of the Law against the Jewish innovators?

Other particulars of a like nature might be mentioned, if time allowed, as the fact that in Chron. xxiii. 1-8 — the laws for the admission of strangers and aliens — Edom is mentioned as the most favored nation, whereas from the time of David onwards Edom was one of Judah's bitterest enemies. Surely a writer of Josiah's time would not have expressed a feeling of brotherhood for a people whom the psalmists and prophets uniformly denounced as a cruel enemy! On the other hand, there are omissions which must be held very strange on the hypothesis of the origin of the book in the seventh century. We find in it, for instance, no mention of the great kingdoms of Syria, Assyria, and Babylon, with which the later fortunes of Judah and Israel were so closely associated, but we do find a reference to Egypt, and to Edom, Moab, and Ammon, which are associated with the time of Moses. Neither do we find any allusion to the great schism which rent the twelve tribes asunder in the reign of Rehoboam, but everywhere the unity of the nation is taken for granted, and its religious unity as well. Such are some of the grounds upon which the antiquity and historical reliability of the book of Deuteronomy are reasonably supported.

Reviewing the whole argument, let me state clearly what we claim has been established by the

scholars who contest the modern view of Deuteronomy. We do not claim that all the difficulties marshaled with so much skill by the advocates of that view have been met. But our claim is that the *most important* of them have been cleared up, and that, on the other hand, the difficulties of the modern view are far greater — are, in fact, insuperable. In some of its cardinal points the argument for it has been shown to have completely broken down. Now we insist that nothing but clear and conclusive proof will suffice to establish a view which, like this, demands a radical and revolutionary change in the belief of the Christian Church respecting the antiquity, and therefore the authority, of one of the venerable books of the Bible. Such proof its advocates have most certainly not produced, and till they have produced it, their hypothesis can have no claim to displace the long settled belief of the Church. I think, however, a dispassionate review of the respective arguments, merely on their merits, must lead to the conclusion that apart from the immense weight of the tradition of two thousand years, the balance of probability is immensely against the modern view.

I hope what has been urged in these Lectures may convey a fair idea of some of the reasons which appear to me to justify one in hesitating to accept

the view of Jewish history and literature now so popular among the critics. I have sought to show as well as my narrow limits would allow that an unlearned Christian may still keep his Bible, as the record of revelation and of a divinely guided history of the chosen people, without disloyalty to truth and without justly incurring the charge of shutting out the light which scholarship has to offer.

On the whole, we find ourselves in pretty good scholarly company when we withhold our assent from the elaborate and pretentious theories which turn the Biblical writings upside down — placing the prophets before the Law — and, “with all the paraphernalia of erudition,” emasculate the early history of Israel of all historical truth, as well as of all supernatural significance. We need not yet dismiss Abraham, the father of the faithful, from the stage of history as a personification of Hebrew national tradition. We need not yet resolve the beautiful story of Joseph into an astral myth. We need not yet lose from the goodly fellowship of the prophets the majestic figure of Moses, the leader and lawgiver of the chosen people, nor identify Caleb, the faithful, with the dog star Sirius.¹ We

¹ Assyriologists like Winckler will have it that the religion of Israel sprang from Babylonian mythology. Jacob's twelve sons represent the twelve signs of the zodiac; Saul and Jonathan the constellation Gemini; David is a solar hero, his red hair an image of the rays of the sun, while Goliath represents Orion.

may still without shame decline to believe the latest theory of the Assyrological higher critics, that the whole ancient Biblical history is “a mere flimsy plagiarism of Babylonian myths” — a mere “perversion of Chaldean legends.”

In conclusion, let me say that the assurance of even so devout and erudite a scholar as Dr. Driver, that the moral and devotional value of the Old Testament remains unaffected by the popular critical views, has not been forgotten, but it fails to allay our apprehensions of the baleful influence of those views upon the public mind both as regards the Old and the New Testament.¹ It may not be amiss — we hope it is not invidious — to recall the fact that Strauss gave the Christian world a similar assur-

¹ A modern scholar of high repute, in a volume published since this Lecture was written, says: “With the best will in the world to accept whatever new light criticism may have to throw on the structure and meaning of the Old Testament, the author has to confess that his study of the critical developments — now for over thirty years — has increasingly convinced him that, while Biblical students are indebted to the critics, and to Old Testament science generally, for valuable help, the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis now in the ascendant is, neither in its methods nor in its results, entitled to the unqualified confidence often claimed for it. He is persuaded, on the contrary, that it rests on erroneous fundamental principles, is eaten through with subjectivity, and must, if carried out to its logical issues — to which, happily, very many do not carry it — prove subversive of our Christian faith.” — *The Problem of the Old Testament*, Jas. Orr, D.D. Preface, p. xv.

ance in the preface to his "Leben Jesu" (1835). All the great facts and doctrines of Christianity were, he declared, entirely unaffected by his criticism; but in the end, when his criticism had come to its fruitage in his second Life of Christ, a generation later, the futility of that assurance was plainly seen, for not one of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity remained.

There is no question that the more advanced wing of the critical army have waxed bold even to arrogance in the advocacy of views that are destructive of faith in the divine origin and authority of the Holy Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament. If any proof were demanded that the tendency of the criticism here under review is to the serious prejudice of faith and the disintegration of Christian doctrine, it were enough to point to the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, and to remind the reader that it is edited by a dignitary of the English Church. Certainly no one can thoughtfully survey the world of religious thought without perceiving that there is a strong current of thought, making itself widely felt, which is distinctly antagonistic to recognizing in Jesus of Nazareth the Christ of the Christian ages, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. And it is as little doubtful that the destructive criticism, which has so seriously disintegrated the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, has a

very close connection with that anti-Christian spirit. It is partly its cause, and partly its consequence: it produces unbelief, and in turn is produced by it.

To Kuenen and Wellhausen Jesus was a great religious genius — the greatest in history — the purest interpreter of God to man that ever lived — but yet not the Son of God in the sense of the Christian Church. He calls himself the Son of God “not because he is of a unique nature, but because he is a man” (Wellhausen). To Dr. Driver and Dr. Robertson Smith, on the other hand, Jesus is possessed of absolute Godhead. But the question is not of the beliefs of particular theologians, but of the tendency of the system they hold. And I frankly avow my belief that the history of the advanced Higher Criticism for the last quarter of a century justifies the belief that it tends to destroy faith in the divine origin of the Scriptures, in the truth of the New Testament history, and ultimately in the divine authority and the divine nature of Jesus Christ.¹

¹ Dr. James Orr, in the conclusion of his admirable work, writes in similar strain:

“The storm of criticism which, in the last decades, assailed the Old Testament, was fondly thought by many to leave intact the New Testament. What mattered it about Abraham and Moses, so long as Jesus and His Gospel remained. That delusion is passing away. . . . The principles of a rationalistic criticism, having once gained recognition and approval in the

The danger is a very real one. It is to be met, however, not by putting barriers in the way of free inquiry, but by training up scholars in Biblical science who shall be able to meet the destructive critics on their own ground, and overcome them with their own weapons. It is a matter of profound thankfulness that there is already a goodly company of scholars equipped for this work, and it has been one of the chief purposes of what I have written to direct attention to their able vindication of the truth of the Scriptures.

Let me in conclusion express the conviction that as the work of true Criticism is tested by time, and purified in the alembic of a yet riper and more reverent scholarship, the Church will be more and more its debtor. Truth is a fire which will consume the wood and the hay and the stubble, both of the critics and of the theologians, but the gold and the silver and the precious stones — the eternal verities of God's revelation — will come out of the furnace unharmed, not even the smell of fire upon them, brighter and more resplendent than ever.

region of the Old Testament, are now being transferred and applied with increasing boldness and vigour to the New, with the result that it is rapidly coming to be assumed that only a Christ from whom all supernatural traits are stripped off can be accepted as historical by the 'modern mind' . . . A grave peril has thus arisen." — *The Problem of the Old Testament*, p. 477-8.

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